THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH

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THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH

A TALE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

VOLUME II

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A THIEF

BY

CHARLES READE, D. C. L.

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THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH

CHAPTER I.

Among strangers Margaret Brandt was comparatively happy. And soon a new and unexpected cause of content arose. A civic dignitary being ill, and fanciful in proportion, went from doctor to doctor; and, having arrived at death's door, sent for Peter. Peter found him bled and purged to nothing. He flung a battalion of bottles out of window, and left it open; beat up yolks of eggs in neat Schiedam, and administered it in small doses: followed this up by meat stewed in red wine and water, shredding into both mild febrifugal herbs, that did no harm. Finally, his patient got about again, looking something between a man and a pillow-case, and, being a voluble dignitary, spread Peter's fame in every street; and that artist, who had long merited a reputation in vain, made one rapidly by luck. Things looked bright. The old man's pride was cheered at last, and his purse began to fill. He spent much of his gain, however, in sovereign herbs and choice drugs, and would have so invested them all, but Margaret white-mailed a part. The victory came too late. Its happy excitement was fatal.

One evening in bidding her good-night his voice seemed rather inarticulate.

The next morning he was found speechless, and only just sensible.

Margaret, who had been for years her father's attentive pupil, saw at once that he had had a paralytic stroke. But not trusting to herself, she ran for a doctor. One of those, who, obstructed by Peter, had not killed the civic dignitary, came and cheerfully confirmed her views. He was for bleeding the patient. She declined. "He was always against blooding," said she, "especially the old." Peter lived, but was never the same man again. His memory became much affected, and of course he was not to be trusted to prescribe; and several patients had come, and one or two, that were bent on being cured by the new doctor, and no other, awaited his convalescence. Misery stared her in the face. She resolved to go for advice and comfort to her cousin William Johnson, from whom she had hitherto kept aloof out of pride and poverty. She found him and his servant sitting in the same room, and neither of them the better for liquor. Mastering all signs of surprise, she gave her greetings, and presently told him she had come to talk on a family matter, and with this glanced quietly at the servant by way of hint. The woman took it, but not as expected.

"Oh, you can speak before me, can she not, my old man?"

At this familiarity Margaret turned very red, and said, —

"I cry you mercy, mistress. I knew not my cousin had fallen into the custom of this town. Well, I must take a fitter opportunity;" and she rose to go.

"I wot not what ye mean by custom o' the town," said the woman, bouncing up. "But this I know: 'tis the part of a faithful servant to keep her master from being preyed on by his beggarly kin."

Margaret retorted: "Ye are too modest, mistress. Ye

are no servant. Your speech betrays you. 'Tis not till the ape hath mounted the tree that she shows her tail so plain. Nay, there sits the servant; God help him! And while so it is, fear not thou his kin will ever be so poor in spirit as come where the likes of you can flout their dole." And casting one look of mute reproach at her cousin for being so little of a man as to sit passive and silent all this time, she turned and went haughtily out; nor would she shed a single tear till she got home and thought of it. And now here were two men to be lodged and fed by one pregnant girl; and another mouth coming into the world.

But this last, though the most helpless of all, was their best friend.

Nature was strong in Margaret Brandt; that same nature which makes the brutes, the birds, and the insects so cunning at providing food and shelter for their progeny yet to come.

Stimulated by nature she sat and brooded, and brooded, and thought, and thought, how to be beforehand with destitution. Ay, though she had still five gold pieces left, she saw starvation coming with inevitable foot.

Her sex, when, deviating from custom, it thinks with male intensity, thinks just as much to the purpose as we do. She rose, bade Martin move Peter to another room, made her own very neat and clean, polished the glass globe, and suspended it from the ceiling, dusted the crocodile and nailed him to the outside wall: and, after duly instructing Martin, set him to play the lounging sentinel about the street door, and tell the crocodile-bitten that a great, and aged, and learned alchymist abode there, who in his moments of recreation would sometimes amuse himself by curing mortal diseases.

Patients soon came, and were received by Margaret, and demanded to see the leech. "That might not be.

He was deep in his studies, searching for the grand elixir, and not princes could have speech of him. They must tell her their symptoms, and return in two hours." And, oh! mysterious powers! when they did return, the drug or draught was always ready for them. Sometimes, when it was a worshipful patient, she would carefully scan his face, and feeling both pulse and skin, as well as hearing his story, would go softly with it to Peter's room; and there think and ask herself how her father, whose system she had long quietly observed, would have treated the case. Then she would write an illegible scrawl with a cabalistic letter, and bring it down reverentially, and show it the patient, and "Could he read that?" Then it would be either, "I am no reader," or, with admiration, "Nay, mistress, naught can I make on't."

"Ay, but I can. 'Tis sovereign. Look on thyself as cured!" If she had the materials by her, and she was too good an economist not to favor somewhat those medicines she had in her own stock, she would sometimes let the patient see her compound it, often and anxiously consulting the sacred prescription lest great science should suffer in her hands. And so she would send them away relieved of cash, but with their pockets full of medicine, and minds full of faith, and humbugged to their heart's content. *Populus vult decipi.* And when they were gone, she would take down two little boxes Gerard had made her; and on one of these she had written *To-day*, and on the other *To-morrow*, and put the smaller coins into "To-day," and the larger into "To-morrow," along with such of her gold pieces as had survived the journey from Sevenbergen, and the expenses of housekeeping in a strange place. And so she met current expenses, and laid by for the rainy day she saw coming, and mixed drugs with simples, and vice with virtue. On this last score her conscience pricked her

sore, and after each day's comedy, she knelt down and prayed God to forgive her "for the sake of her child." But lo, and behold, cure after cure was reported to her; so then her conscience began to harden. Martin Wittenhaagen had of late been a dead weight on her hands. Like most men who have endured great hardships, he had stiffened rather suddenly. But, though less supple, he was as strong as ever, and at his own pace could have carried the doctor herself round Rotterdam city. He carried her slops instead.

In this new business he showed the qualities of a soldier: unreasoning obedience, punctuality, accuracy, despatch, and drunkenness.

He fell among "good fellows"; the blackguards plied him with Schiedam; he babbled, he bragged.

Doctor Margaret had risen very high in his estimation. All this brandishing of a crocodile for a standard, and setting a dotard in ambush, and getting rid of slops, and taking good money in exchange, struck him not as science, but something far superior, strategy. And he boasted in his cups, and before a mixed company, how "me and my general we are a-biting of the burghers."

When this revelation had had time to leaven the city, his general, Doctor Margaret, received a call from the constables: they took her, trembling, and begging subordinate machines to forgive her, before the burgomaster; and by his side stood real physicians, a terrible row, in long robes and square caps, accusing her of practising unlawfully on the bodies of the duke's lieges. At first she was too frightened to say a word. Novice like, the very name of "law" paralyzed her. But being questioned closely, but not so harshly as if she had been ugly, she told the truth; she had long been her father's pupil, and had but followed his system, and she had cured many; "and it is not for myself in very deed, sirs,

but I have two poor helpless honest men at home upon my hands, and how else can I keep them? Ah, good sirs, let a poor girl make her bread honestly; ye hinder them not to make it idly and shamefully; and oh, sirs, ye are husbands, ye are fathers; ye cannot but see I have reason to work and provide as best I may;" and ere this woman's appeal had left her lips, she would have given the world to recall it, and stood with one hand upon her heart, and one before her face, hiding it, but not the tears that trickled underneath it. All which went to the wrong address. Perhaps a female bailiff might have yielded to such arguments, and bade her practise medicine, and break law, till such time as her child should be weaned, and no longer.

"What have we to do with that," said the burgomaster, "save and except that if thou wilt pledge thyself to break the law no more, I will remit the imprisonment, and exact but the fine?"

On this Doctor Margaret clasped her hands together, and vowed most penitently never, never, never, to cure body or beast again; and being dismissed with the constables to pay the fine, she turned at the door, and courtesied, poor soul, and thanked the gentlemen for their forbearance.

And to pay the fine the "to-morrow box" must be opened on the instant; and with excess of caution she had gone and nailed it up, that no slight temptation might prevail to open it. And now she could not draw the nails, and the constables grew impatient, and doubted its contents, and said, "Let us break it for you." But she would not let them. "Ye will break it worse than I shall." And she took a hammer, and struck too faintly, and lost all strength for a minute, and wept hysterically; and at last she broke it, and a little cry broke from her when it broke: and she paid the fine, and it took all her

unlawful gains and two gold pieces to boot; and, when the men were gone, she drew the broken pieces of the box, and what little money they had left her, all together on the table, and her arms went round them, and her rich hair escaped, and fell down all loose, and she bowed her forehead on the wreck, and sobbed, "My love's box it is broken, and my heart withal;" and so remained. And Martin Wittenhaagen came in, and she could not lift her head, but sighed out to him what had befallen her, ending, "My love his box is broken, and so mine heart is broken."

And Martin was not so sad as wroth. Some traitor had betrayed him. What stony heart had told, and brought her to this pass? Whoever it was should feel his arrow's point. The curious attitude in which he must deliver the shaft never occurred to him.

"Idle chat! idle chat!" moaned Margaret, without lifting her brow from the table. "When you have slain all the gossips in this town, can we eat them? Tell me how to keep you all, or prithee hold thy peace, and let the saints get leave to whisper me." Martin held his tongue, and cast uneasy glances at his defeated general.

Towards evening she rose, and washed her face and did up her hair, and doggedly bade Martin take down the crocodile, and put out a basket instead.

"I can get up linen better than they seem to do it in this street," said she, "and you must carry it in the basket."

"That will I for thy sake," said the soldier.

"Good Martin! forgive me that I spake shrewishly to thee."

Even while they were talking came a male for advice. Margaret told it the mayor had interfered and forbidden her to sell drugs. "But," said she, "I will gladly iron and starch your linen for you, and — I will come and fetch it from your house."

"Are ye mad, young woman?" said the male. "I come for a leech, and ye proffer me a washerwoman;" and it went out in dudgeon.

"There is a stupid creature," said Margaret, sadly.

Presently came a female to tell the symptoms of her sick child. Margaret stopped it.

"We are forbidden by the bailiff to sell drugs. But I will gladly wash, iron, and starch your linen for you — and — I will come and fetch it from your house."

"Oh, ay," said the female. "Well, I have some smocks and ruffs foul. Come for them; and when you *are* there, you can look at the boy;" and it told her where it lived, and when its husband would be out; yet it was rather fond of its husband than not.

An introduction is an introduction. And two or three patients out of all those who came and were denied medicine, made Doctor Margaret their washerwoman.

"Now, Martin, you must help. I'll no more cats than can slay mice."

"Mistress, the stomach is not a-wanting for't, but the head-piece, worse luck."

"Oh! I mean not the starching and ironing; that takes a woman and a handy one. But the bare washing; a man can surely contrive that. Why, a mule has wit enough in's head to do't with his hoofs, an ye could drive him into the tub. Come, off doublet, and try."

"I am your man," said the brave old soldier, stripping for the unwonted toil. "I'll risk my arm in soapsuds, an you will risk your glory."

"My what?"

"Your glory and honor as a — washerwoman."

"Gramercy! if you are man enough to bring me half-washed linen t' iron, I am woman enough to fling't back i' the suds."

And so the brave girl and the brave soldier worked

with a will, and kept the wolf from the door. More they could not do. Margaret had repaired the "to-morrow box," and as she leaned over the glue, her tears mixed with it, and she cemented her exiled lover's box with them, at which a smile is allowable, but an intelligent smile tipped with pity, please, and not the empty guffaw of the nineteenth-century jackass, burlesquing Bibles, and making fun of all things except fun. But when mended it stood unreplenished. They kept the weekly rent paid, and the pot boiling, but no more.

And now came a concatenation. Recommended from one to another, Margaret washed for the mayor. And bringing home the clean linen one day, she heard in the kitchen that his worship's only daughter was stricken with disease and not like to live. Poor Margaret could not help cross-questioning, and a female servant gave her such of the symptoms as she had observed. But they were too general. However, one gossip would add one fact, and another another. And Margaret pondered them all.

At last one day she met the mayor himself. He recognized her directly. "Why, you are the unlicensed doctor."

"I was," said she, "but now I'm your worship's washerwoman." The dignitary colored, and said that was rather a come-down.

"Nay, I bear no malice, for your worship might have been harder. Rather would I do you a good turn. Sir, you have a sick daughter. Let me see her."

The mayor shook his head. "That cannot be. The law I do enforce on others I may not break myself."

Margaret opened her eyes. "Alack, sir, I seek no guerdon now for curing folk; why, I am a washerwoman. I trow one may heal all the world, an if one will but let the world starve one in return."

"That is no more than just," said the mayor; he added, "an ye make no trade on't; there is no offence."

"Then let me see her."

"What avails it? The learnedest leeches in Rotterdam have all seen her, and bettered her nought. Her ill is inscrutable. One skilled wight saith spleen; another, liver; another, blood; another, stomach; and another, that she is possessed; and in very truth, she seems to have a demon; shunneth all company; pineth alone; eateth no more victuals than might diet a sparrow. Speaketh seldom, nor hearkens them that speak, and weareth thinner and paler and nearer and nearer the grave, well-a-day."

"Sir," said Margaret, "an if you take your velvet doublet to half a dozen of shops in Rotterdam, and speer is this fine or sorry velvet, and worth how much the ell, those six traders will eye it and feel it, and all be in one story to a letter. And why? Because they know their trade. And your leeches are all in different stories. Why? Because they know not their trade. I have heard my father say each is enamoured of some one evil, and seeth it with his bat's eyn in every patient. Had they stayed at home, and ne'er seen your daughter, they had answered all the same, spleen, blood, stomach, lungs, liver, lunacy, or, as they call it, possession. Let me see her. We are of a sex, and that is much." And when he still hesitated, "Saints of heaven!" cried she, giving way to the irritability of a breeding woman, "is this how men love their own flesh and blood? Her mother had ta'en me in her arms ere this, and carried me to the sick-room." And two violet eyes flashed fire.

"Come with me," said the mayor, hastily.

"Mistress, I have brought thee a new doctor."

The person addressed, a pale young girl of eighteen,

gave a contemptuous wrench of her shoulder, and turned more decidedly to the fire she was sitting over.

Margaret came softly and sat beside her. "But 'tis one that will not torment you."

"A woman!" exclaimed the young lady, with surprise and some contempt.

"Tell her your symptoms."

"What for? you will be no wiser."

"You will be none the worse."

"Well, I have no stomach for food, and no heart for anything. Now cure me, and go."

"Patience awhile! Your food, is it tasteless like in your mouth?"

"Ay. How knew you that?"

"Nay, I knew it not till you did tell me. I trow you would be better for a little good company."

"I trow not. What is their silly chat to me?"

Here Margaret requested the father to leave them alone, and in his absence put some practical questions. Then she reflected.

"When you wake i' the morning you find yourself quiver, as one may say?"

"Nay. Ay. How knew you that?"

"Shall I dose you, or shall I but tease you a bit with my 'silly chat'?"

"Which you will."

"Then I will tell you a story. 'Tis about two true lovers."

"I hate to hear of lovers," said the girl; "nevertheless canst tell me, 'twill be less nauseous than your physic — maybe."

Margaret then told her a love story. The maiden was a girl called Ursel, and the youth one Conrad; she an old physician's daughter, he the son of a hosier at Tergou. She told their adventures, their troubles, their sad condi-

tion. She told it from the female point of view, and in a sweet and winning and earnest voice, that by degrees soon laid hold of this sullen heart, and held it breathless; and when she broke it off her patient was much disappointed.

"Nay, nay, I must hear the end. I will hear it."

"Ye cannot, for I know it not; none knoweth that but God."

"Ah; your Ursel was a jewel of worth," said the girl, earnestly. "Would she were here!"

"Instead of her that is here?"

"I say not that," and she blushed a little.

"You do but think it."

"Thought is free. Whether or no, an she were here, I'd give her a buss, poor thing."

"Then give it me, for I am she."

"Nay, nay, that I'll be sworn y'are not."

"Say not so; in very truth I am she. And prithee, sweet mistress, go not from your word, but give me the buss ye promised me, and with a good heart, for oh, my own heart lies heavy; heavy as thine, sweet mistress."

The young gentlewoman rose and put her arms round Margaret's neck and kissed her. "I am woe for you," she sighed. "You are a good soul; you have done me good — a little." (A gulp came in her throat.) "Come again! come often!"

Margaret did come again, and talked with her, and gently but keenly watched what topics interested her, and found there was but one. Then she said to the mayor, "I know your daughter's trouble, and 'tis curable."

"What is't? the blood?"

"Nay."

"The stomach?"

"Nay."

"The liver?"

"Nay."

"The foul fiend?"

"Nay."

"What then?"

"Love."

"Love? stuff, impossible! She is but a child; she never stirs abroad unguarded. She never hath from a child."

"All the better; then we shall not have far to look for him."

"I trow not. I shall but command her to tell me the caitiff's name, that hath by magic arts ensnared her young affections."

"Oh, how foolish be the wise!" said Margaret; "what, would ye go and put her on her guard? Nay, let us work by art first; and if that fails, then 'twill still be time for violence and folly."

Margaret then with some difficulty prevailed on the mayor to take advantage of its being Saturday, and pay all his people their salaries in his daughter's presence and hers.

It was done: some fifteen people entered the room, and received their pay with a kind word from their employer. Then Margaret, who had sat close to the patient all the time, rose and went out. The mayor followed her.

"Sir, how call you yon black-haired lad?"

"That is Ulrich, my clerk."

"Well then, 'tis he."

"Now Heaven forbid! a lad I took out of the streets.

"Well, but your worship is an understanding man. Yon took him not up without some merit of his?"

"Merit? not a jot! I liked the looks of the brat, that was all."

"Was that no merit? He pleased the father's eye. And now he hath pleased the daughter's. That has oft been seen since Adam."

"How know ye 'ti he?"

"I held her hand, and with my finger did lightly touch her wrist; and, when the others came and went, 'twas as if dogs and cats had fared in and out. But at this Ulrich's coming her pulse did leap, and her eye shine; and, when he went, she did sink back and sigh; and 'twas to be seen the sun had gone out of the room for her. Nay, burgomaster, look not on me so scared; no witch or magician I, but a poor girl that hath been docile, and so bettered herself by a great neglected leech's art and learning. I tell ye all this hath been done before, thousands of years ere we were born. Now bide thou there till I come to thee, and prithee, prithee, spoil not good work wi' meddling." She then went back and asked her patient for a lock of her hair.

"Take it," said she, more listlessly than ever.

"Why, 'tis a lass of marble. How long do you count to be like that, mistress?"

"Till I am in my grave, sweet Peggy."

"Who knows? may be in ten minutes you will be altogether as hot."

She ran into the shop, but speedily returned to the mayor and said, "Good news! He fancies her, and more than a little. Now how is't to be? Will you marry your child, or bury her? for there is no third way, for shame and love they do rend her virgin heart to death."

The dignitary decided for the more cheerful rite, but not without a struggle; and, with its marks on his face, he accompanied Margaret to his daughter. But as men are seldom in a hurry to drink their wormwood, he stood silent. So Doctor Margaret said, cheerfully, "Mistress, your lock is gone, I have sold it."

"And who was so mad as to buy such a thing?" inquired the young lady scornfully.

"Oh, a black-haired laddie wi' white teeth. They call him Ulrich."

The pale face reddened directly — brow and all.

"Says he, 'Oh, sweet mistress, give it me.' I had told them all whose 'twas. 'Nay,' said I, 'selling is my livelihood, not giving.' So he offered me this, he offered me that, but nought less would I take than his next quarter's wages."

"Cruel," murmured the girl scarce audibly.

"Why, you are in one tale with your father. Says he to me when I told him, 'Oh, an he loves her hair so well, 'tis odd but he loves the rest of her. Well,' quoth he, ''tis an honest lad, and a' shall have her, gien she will but leave her sulks and consent.' So, what say ye, mistress? will you be married to Ulrich, or buried i' the kirkyard?"

"Father! father!"

"'Tis so, girl, speak thy mind."

"I — will — obey — my father — in all things," stammered the poor girl, trying hard to maintain the advantageous position in which Margaret had placed her. But nature, and the joy and surprise, were too strong even for a virgin's bashful cunning. She cast an eloquent look on them both, and sank at her father's knees, and begged his pardon, with many sobs for having doubted his tenderness.

He raised her in his arms, and took her, radiant through her tears with joy, and returning life, and filial love, to his breast; and the pair passed a truly sacred moment, and the dignitary was as happy as he thought to be miserable, so hard is it for mortals to foresee. And they looked round for Margaret, but she had stolen away softly.

The young girl searched the house for her.

"Where is she hid? Where on earth is she?"

Where was she? why, in her own house, dressing meat for her two old children, and crying bitterly the while at the living picture of happiness she had just created.

"Well-a-day: the odds between her lot and mine; well-a-day!"

Next time she met the dignitary, he hemm'd and hawed, and remarked what a pity it was the law forbade him to pay her who had cured his daughter. "However, when all is done, 'twas not art, 'twas but woman's wit."

"Nought but that, burgomaster," said Margaret bitterly. "Pay the men of art for not curing her: all the guerdon I seek, that cured her, is this; go not and give your foul linen away from me by way of thanks."

"Why should I?" inquired he.

"Marry, because there be fools about ye will tell ye she that hath wit to cure dark diseases, cannot have wit to take dirt out of rags; so pledge me your faith."

The dignitary promised pompously, and felt all the patron.

Something must be done to fill "to-morrow's box." She hawked her initial letters and her illuminated vellums all about the town. Printing had by this time dealt calligraphy in black and white a terrible blow in Holland and Germany. But some copies of the printed books were usually illuminated and lettered. The printers offered Margaret prices for work in these two kinds.

"I'll think on't," said she.

She took down her diurnal book, and calculated that the price of an hour's work on those arts would be about one-fifth what she got for an hour at the tub and mangle. "I'll starve first," said she; "what! pay a craft and a mystery five times less than a handicraft!"

Martin, carrying the dry clothes-basket, got treated, and drunk. This time he babbled her whole story. The girls got hold of it and gibed her at the fountain.

All she had gone through was light to her, compared with the pins and bodkins her own sex drove into her heart, whenever she came near the merry crew with her pitcher, and that was every day. Each sex has its form of cruelty; man's is more brutal and terrible; but shallow women, that have neither read nor suffered, have an unmuscular barbarity of their own (where no feeling of sex steps in to overpower it). This defect, intellectual perhaps rather than moral, has been mitigated in our day by books, especially by able works of fiction; for there are two roads to that highest effort of intelligence, pity; experience of sorrows, and imagination, by which alone we realize the grief we never felt. In the fifteenth century girls with pitchers had but one: experience; and at sixteen years of age or so, that road had scarce been trodden. These girls persisted that Margaret was deserted by her lover. And to be deserted was a crime. (They had not been deserted yet.) Not a word against the Gerard they had created out of their own heads. For his imaginary crime they fell foul of the supposed victim. Sometimes they affronted her to her face. Oftener they talked at her backwards and forwards with a subtle skill, and a perseverance which, "Oh, that they had bestowed on the arts," as poor Aguecheek says.

Now Margaret was brave, and a coward; brave to battle difficulties and ill fortune; brave to shed her own blood for those she loved. Fortitude she had. But she had no true fighting courage. She was a powerful young woman, rather tall, full, and symmetrical; yet, had one of those slips of girls slapped her face, the poor fool's hands would have dropped powerless, or gone to her own eyes instead of her adversary's. Nor was she even a

match for so many tongues; and, besides, what could she say? She knew nothing of these girls, except that somehow they had found out her sorrows, and hated her; only she thought to herself they must be very happy, or they would not be so hard on her.

So she took their taunts in silence; and all her struggle was not to let them see their power to make her writhe within.

Here came in her fortitude; and she received their blows with well-feigned, icy hauteur. They slapped a statue.

But one day, when her spirits were weak, as happens at times to females in her condition, a dozen assailants followed suit so admirably, that her whole sex seemed to the dispirited one to be against her, and she lost heart, and the tears began to run silently at each fresh stab.

On this their triumph knew no bounds, and they followed her half way home, casting barbed speeches.

After that exposure of weakness the statue could be assumed no more. So then she would stand timidly aloof out of tongue-shot, till her young tyrants' pitchers were all filled, and they gone; and then creep up with hers. And one day she waited so long that the fount had ceased to flow. So the next day she was obliged to face the phalanx, or her house go dry. She drew near slowly, but with the less tremor, that she saw a man at the well talking to them. He would distract their attention, and, besides, they would keep their foul tongues quiet if only to blind the male to their real character. This conjecture, though shrewd, was erroneous. They could not all flirt with that one man: so the outsiders indemnified themselves by talking at her the very moment she came up.

"Any news from foreign parts, Jacqueline?"

"None for me, Martha. My lad goes no farther from me than the town wall."

"I can't say as much," says a third.

"But if he goes t' Italy I have got another ready to take the fool's place."

"He'll not go thither, lass. They go not far till they are sick of us that bide in Holland."

Surprise and indignation, and the presence of a man, gave Margaret a moment's fighting courage. "Oh, flout me not, and show your ill nature before the very soldier. In Heaven's name, what ill did I ever to ye, what harsh word cast back, for all you have flung on me, a desolate stranger in your cruel town, that ye flout me for my bereavement and my poor lad's most unwilling banishment? Hearts of flesh would surely pity us both, for that ye cast in my teeth these many days, ye brows of brass, ye bosoms of stone."

They stared at this novelty, resistance; and ere they could recover and make mincemeat of her, she put her pitcher quietly down, and threw her coarse apron over her head, and stood there grieving, her short-lived spirit oozing fast. "Hallo!" cried the soldier, "why, what is your ill?" She made no reply. But a little girl, who had long secretly hated the big ones, squeaked out, "They did flout her, they are aye flouting her; she may not come nigh the fountain for fear o' them, and 'tis a black shame."

"Who spoke to her? Not I, for one."

"Nor I. I would not bemean myself so far."

The man laughed heartily at this display of dignity. "Come, wife," said he, "never lower thy flag to such light skirmishers as these. Hast a tongue i' thy head as well as they."

"Alack, good soldier, I was not bred to bandy foul terms."

"Well, but hast a better arm than these. Why not take 'em by twos across thy knee, and skelp 'em till they cry Meculpee?"

"Nay, I would not hurt their bodies for all their cruel hearts."

"Then ye must e'en laugh at them, wife. What! a woman grown, and not see why mesdames give tongue? You are a buxom wife; they are a bundle of thread-papers. You are fair and fresh: they have all the Dutch rim under their bright eyes, that comes of dwelling in eternal swamps. There lies your crime. Come, gie me thy pitcher, and, if they flout me, shalt see me scrub 'em all wi' my beard till they squeak holy mother." The pitcher was soon filled, and the soldier put it in Margaret's hand. She murmured, "Thank you kindly, brave soldier."

He patted her on the shoulder. "Come, courage, brave wife; the divell is dead!" She let the heavy pitcher fall on his foot directly. He cursed horribly, and hopped in a circle, saying, "No, the thief's alive and has broken my great toe."

The apron came down, and there was a lovely face all flushed with emotion, and two beaming eyes in front of him, and two hands held out clasped.

"Nay, nay, tis nought," said he, good-humoredly, mistaking.

"Denys?"

"Well? But — hallo! How do you know my name is" —

"Denys of Burgundy!"

"Why, odsbodikins! I know you not, and you know me."

"By Gerard's letter. Cross-bow! beard! handsome! The divell is dead."

"Sword of Goliah! this must be she. Red hair, violet eyes, lovely face. But I took ye for a married wife, seeing ye" —

"Tell me my name," said she quickly.

"Margaret Brandt."

"Gerard? Where is he? Is he in life? Is he well? Is he coming? Is he come? Why is he not here? Where have ye left him? Oh, tell me! prithee, prithee, prithee tell me!"

"Ay, ay, but not here. Oh, ye are all curiosity now, mesdames, eh? Lass, I have been three months a-foot travelling all Holland to find ye, and here you are. Oh, be joyful!" and he flung his cap in the air, and seizing both her hands kissed them ardently. "Ah, my pretty she-comrade, I have found thee at last. I knew I should. Shalt be flouted no more. I'll twist your necks at the first word, ye little trollops. And I have got fifteen gold angels left for thee, and our Gerard will soon be here. Shalt wet thy purple eyes no more."

But the fair eyes were wet even now, looking kindly and gratefully at the friend that had dropped among her foes as if from heaven: Gerard's comrade. "Prithee come home with me, good, kind Denys. I cannot speak of him before these." They went off together, followed by a chorus. "She has gotten a man. She has gotten a man at last. Hoo, hoo, hoo!"

Margaret quickened her steps; but Denys took down his cross-bow and pretended to shoot them all dead; they fled quadrivious, shrieking.

CHAPTER II.

The reader already knows how much these two had to tell one another. It was a sweet yet bitter day for Margaret, since it brought her a true friend, and ill news: for now first she learned that Gerard was all alone in that strange land. She could not think with Denys that he would come home; indeed he would have arrived before this.

Denys was a balm. He called her his she-comrade, and was always cheering her up with his formula and hilarities, and she petted him and made much of him, and feebly hectored it over him as well as over Martin, and would not let him eat a single meal out of her house, and forbade him to use naughty words. "It spoils you, Denys. Good lack, to hear such ugly words come forth so comely a head: forbear, or I shall be angry: so be civil." Whereupon Denys was upon his good behavior, and ludicrous the struggle between his native politeness and his acquired ruffianism. And as it never rains but it pours, other persons now solicited Margaret's friendship. She had written to Margaret Van Eyck a humble letter telling her she knew she was no longer the favorite she had been, and would keep her distance; but could not forget her benefactress's past kindness. She then told her briefly how many ways she had battled for a living, and, in conclusion, begged earnestly that her residence might not be betrayed, "least of all to his people. I do hate them, they drove him from me. And, even when he was gone, their hearts turned not to me as they would an if they had repented their cruelty to him."

The Van Eyck was perplexed. At last she made a confidante of Reicht. The secret ran through Reicht, as through a cylinder, to Catherine.

"Ay, and she is turned that bitter against us?" said that good woman. "She stole our son from us, and now she hates us for not running into her arms. Natheless it is a blessing she is alive and no farther away than Rotterdam."

The English princess, now Countess Charolois, made a stately progress through the northern states of the duchy, accompanied by her step-daughter the young heiress of Burgundy, Marie de Bourgogne. Then the old duke, the most magnificent prince in Europe, put out his splendor. Troops of dazzling knights, and bevies of fair ladies gorgeously attired, attended the two princesses; and minstrels, jongleurs, or story-tellers, bards, musicians, actors, tumblers, followed in the train, and there was fencing, dancing, and joy in every town they shone on. Giles, a court favorite, sent a timely message to Tergou, inviting all his people to meet the pageant at Rotterdam.

They agreed to take a holiday for once in a way, and, setting their married daughter to keep the shop, came to Rotterdam. But to two of them, not the great folk, but little Giles, was the main attraction. They had been in Rotterdam some days, when Denys met Catherine accidentally in the street, and after a warm greeting on both sides, bade her rejoice, for he had found the she-comrade, and crowed; but Catherine cooled him by showing him how much earlier he would have found her by staying quietly at Tergou, than by vagabondizing it all over Holland. "And being found, what the better are we? her heart is set dead against us now."

"Oh, let that flea stick, come you with me to her house."

No, she would not go where she was sure of an ill welcome. "Them that come unbidden sit unseated." No, let Denys be mediator, and bring the parties to a good understanding. He undertook the office at once, and with great pomp and confidence. He trotted off to Margaret and said, "She-comrade, I met this day a friend of thine."

"Thou didst look into the Rotter, then, and see thyself."

"Nay, 'twas a female, and one that seeks thy regard; 'twas Catherine, Gerard's mother."

"Oh, was it?" said Margaret: "then you may tell her she comes too late. There was a time I longed and longed for her; but she held aloof in my hour of most need, so now we will be as we ha' been."

Denys tried to shake this resolution. He coaxed her, but she was bitter and sullen, and not to be coaxed. Then he scolded her well; then at that she went into hysterics.

He was frightened at this result of his eloquence, and, being off his guard, allowed himself to be entrapped into a solemn promise never to recur to the subject. He went back to Catherine crestfallen, and told her. She fired up and told the family how his overtures had been received. Then they fired up; it became a feud and burned fiercer every day. Little Kate alone made some excuses for Margaret.

The very next day another visitor came to Margaret, and found the military enslaved and degraded, Martin up to his elbows in soapsuds, and Denys ironing very clumsily, and Margaret plaiting ruffs, but with a mistress's eye on her raw levies. To these there entered an old man, venerable at first sight, but on nearer view keen and wizened.

"Ah," cried Margaret, then swiftly turned her back

on him and hid her face with invincible repugnance. "Oh, that man! that man!"

"Nay, fear me not," said Ghysbrecht; "I come on a friend's errand. I bring ye a letter from foreign parts."

"Mock me not, old man;" and she turned slowly round.

"Nay, see," and he held out an enormous letter. Margaret darted on it, and held it with trembling hands and glistening eyes. It was Gerard's handwriting.

"Oh, thank you, sir, bless you for this. I forgive you all the ill you ever wrought me." And she pressed the letter to her bosom with one hand, and glided swiftly from the room with it.

As she did not come back, Ghysbrecht went away, but not without a scowl at Martin. Margaret was hours alone with her letter.

CHAPTER III.

When she came down again she was a changed woman. Her eyes were wet, but calm, and all her bitterness and excitement charmed away.

"Denys," said she softly, "I have got my orders. I am to read my lover's letter to his folk."

"Ye will never do that."

"Ay will I."

"I see there is something in the letter has softened ye towards them."

"Not a jot, Denys, not a jot. But an I hated them like poison I would not disobey my love. Denys, 'tis so sweet to obey, and sweetest of all to obey one who is far, far away, and cannot enforce my duty, but must trust my love for my obedience. Ah, Gerard, my darling, at hand I might have slighted thy commands, misliking thy folk as I have cause to do; but now, didst bid me go into the raging sea and read thy sweet letter to the sharks, there I'd go. Therefore, Denys, tell his mother I have got a letter, and if she and hers would hear it, I am their servant; let them say their hour, and I'll seat them as best I can, and welcome them as best I may."

Denys went off to Catherine with this good news. He found the family at dinner, and told them there was a long letter from Gerard. Then in the midst of the joy this caused, he said, "And her heart is softened, and she will read it to you herself; you are to choose your own time."

"What, does she think there are none can read but her?" asked Catherine. "Let her send the letter, and we will read it."

"Nay, but, mother," objected little Kate, "mayhap she cannot bear to part it from her hand: she loves him dearly."

"What, thinks she we shall steal it?"

Cornelis suggested that she would fain wedge herself into the family by means of this letter.

Denys cast a look of scorn on the speaker. "There spoke a bad heart," said he. "La Camarade hates you all like poison. Oh, mistake me not, dame. I defend her not, but so 'tis; yet maugre her spleen, at a word from Gerard she proffers to read you his letter with her own pretty mouth, and hath a voice like honey — sure 'tis a fair proffer."

"'Tis so, mine honest soldier," said the father of the family, "and merits a civil reply; therefore hold your whisht, ye that be women, and I shall answer her. Tell her I, his father, setting aside all past grudges, do for this grace thank her, and, would she have double thanks, let her send my son's letter by thy faithful hand, the which will I read to his flesh and blood, and will then to her so surely and faithfully return, as I am Eli a Dierich a William a Luke, free burgher of Tergou, like my forbears, and, like them, a man of my word."

"Ay, and a man who is better than his word," cried Catherine; "the only one I ever did foregather."

"Hold thy peace, wife."

"Art a man of sense, Eli, a dirk, a chose, a chose,"[1] shouted Denys. "The she-comrade will be right glad to obey Gerard and yet not face you all, whom she hates as wormwood, saving your presence. Bless ye! the world hath changed, she is all submission to-day: 'Obedience is honey,' quoth she; and in sooth 'tis a sweetmeat she cannot but savor, eating so little on't, for what with her fair face, and her mellow tongue; and what

[1] Anglicé, a Thing-em-bob.

wi' flying in fits and terrifying us that be soldiers to death, an we thwart her; and what wi' chiding us one while, and petting us like lambs t'other, she hath made two of the crawlingest slaves ever you saw out of two honest swashbucklers. I be the ironing ruffian, t'other washes."

"What next?"

"What next? why, whenever the brat is in the world I shall rock cradle, and t'other knave will wash tucker and bib. So then, I'll go fetch the letter on the instant. Ye will let me bide and hear it read, will ye not?"

"Else our hearts were black as coal," said Catherine.

So Denys went for the letter. He came back crestfallen. "She will not let it out of her hand neither to me nor you, nor any he or she that lives."

"I knew she would not," said Cornelis.

"Whisht! whisht!" said Eli, "and let Denys tell his story."

"'Nay,' said I, 'but be ruled by me.' 'Not I,' quoth she. 'Well, but,' quoth I, 'that same honey Obedience ye spake of.' — 'You are a fool,' says she; 'obedience to Gerard is sweet, but obedience to any other body, — who ever said that was sweet?'

"At last she seemed to soften a bit, and did give me a written paper for you, mademoiselle. Here 'tis."

"For me?" said little Kate coloring.

"Give that here!" said Eli; and he scanned the writing, and said almost in a whisper, "These be words from the letter. Hearken!

"'And, sweetheart, an if these lines should travel safe to thee, make thou trial of my people's hearts withal. Maybe they are somewhat turned towards me, being far away. If 'tis so, they will show it to thee, since now to me they may not. Read, then, this letter! But I do strictly forbid thee to let it from thy hand;

and if they still hold aloof from thee, why, then say nought, but let them think me dead. Obey me in this; for if thou dost disrespect my judgment and my will in this, thou lovest me not.' "

There was a silence, and Gerard's words copied by Margaret were handed round and inspected.

"Well," said Catherine, "that is another matter. But methinks 'tis for her to come to us, not we to her."

"Alas, mother! what odds does that make?"

"Much," said Eli. "Tell her we are over many to come to her, and bid her hither, the sooner the better."

When Denys was gone, Eli owned it was a bitter pill to him. "When that lass shall cross my threshold, all the mischief and misery she hath made here will seem to come in a-doors in one heap. But what could I do, wife? We *must* hear the news of Gerard. I saw that in thine eyes, and felt it in my own heart. And she is backed by our undutiful but still beloved son, and so is she stronger than we, and brings our noses down to the grindstone, the sly, cruel jade! But never heed. We will hear the letter, and then let her go unblessed, as she came unwelcome."

"Make your mind easy," said Catherine. "She will not come at all." And a tone of regret was visible.

Shortly after, Richart, who had been hourly expected, arrived from Amsterdam grave and dignified in his burgher's robe and gold chain, ruff, and furred cap, and was received not with affection only, but respect, for he had risen a step higher than his parents; and such steps were marked in mediæval society almost as visibly as those in their staircases.

Admitted in due course to the family council, he showed plainly, though not discourteously, that his pride was deeply wounded by their having deigned to treat with Margaret Brandt. "I see the temptation," said he.

"But which of us hath not at times to wish one way and do another?"

This threw a considerable chill over the old people. So little Kate put in a word. "Vex not thyself, dear Richart. Mother says she will not come."

"All the better, sweetheart. I fear me, if she do, I shall hie me back to Amsterdam."

Here Denys popped his head in at the door, and said, "She will be here at three on the great dial."

They all looked at one another in silence.

CHAPTER IV.

"NAY, Richart," said Catherine at last, "for Heaven's sake let not this one sorry wench set us all by the ears: hath she not made ill blood enough already?"

"In very deed she hath. Fear me not, good mother. Let her come and read the letter of the poor boy she hath by devilish arts bewitched, and then let her go. Give me your words to show her no countenance beyond decent and constrained civility; less we may not, being in our own house; and I will say no more." On this understanding they awaited the foe. She, for her part, prepared for the interview in a spirit little less hostile.

When Denys brought word they would not come to her, but would receive her, her lip curled, and she bade him observe how in them every feeling, however small, was larger than the love for Gerard. "Well," said she, "I have not that excuse; so why mimic the petty burgher's pride, the pride of all unlettered folk? I will go to them for Gerard's sake. Oh, how I loathe them!"

Thus poor good-natured Denys was bringing into one house the materials of an explosion.

Margaret made her toilet in the same spirit that a knight of her day dressed for battle — he to parry blows, and she to parry glances — glances of contempt at her poverty, or of irony at her extravagance. Her kirtle was of English cloth, dark blue, and her farthingale and hose of the same material, but a glossy roan, or claret color. Not an inch of pretentious fur about her, but plain snowy linen wristbands, and curiously-plaited linen from the bosom of the kirtle up to the commence-

ment of the throat; it did not encircle her throat, but framed it, being square, not round. Her front hair still peeped in two waves much after the fashion which Mary Queen of Scots revived a century later; but instead of the silver net, which would have ill become her present condition, the rest of her head was covered with a very small tight-fitting hood of dark blue cloth, hemmed with silver. Her shoes were red; but the roan petticoat and hose prepared the spectator's mind for the shock, and they set off the arched instep and shapely foot.

Beauty knew its business then as now.

And with all this she kept her enemies waiting, though it was three by the dial.

At last she started, attended by her he-comrade. And when they were half way, she stopped, and said thoughtfully, "Denys!"

"Well, she-general?"

"I must go home" (piteously).

"What! have ye left somewhat behind?"

"Ay."

"What?"

"My courage. Oh! oh! oh!"

"Nay, nay, be brave, she-general. I shall be with you."

"Ay, but wilt keep close to me when I be there?"

Denys promised, and she resumed her march, but gingerly.

Meantime they were all assembled, and waiting for her with a strange mixture of feelings.

Mortification, curiosity, panting affection, aversion to her who came to gratify those feelings, yet another curiosity to see what she was like, and what there was in her to bewitch Gerard, and make so much mischief.

At last Denys came alone, and whispered, "The she-comrade is without."

"Fetch her in," said Eli. "Now whisht, all of ye. None speak to her but I."

They all turned their eyes to the door in dead silence.

A little muttering was heard outside; Denys's rough organ, and a woman's soft and mellow voice.

Presently that stopped; and then the door opened slowly, and Margaret Brandt, dressed as I have described, and somewhat pale, but calm and lovely, stood on the threshold, looking straight before her.

They all rose but Kate, and remained mute and staring.

"Be seated, mistress," said Eli, gravely, and motioned to a seat that had been set apart for her.

She inclined her head, and crossed the apartment; and in so doing her condition was very visible, not only in her shape, but in her languor.

Cornelis and Sybrandt hated her for it. Richart thought it spoiled her beauty.

It softened the women somewhat.

She took her letter out of her bosom, and kissed it as if she had been alone; then disposed herself to read it with the air of one who knew she was there for that single purpose.

But, as she began, she noticed they had seated her all by herself like a leper. She looked at Denys, and putting her hand down by her side, made him a swift furtive motion to come by her.

He went with an obedient start as if she had cried "March!" and stood at her shoulder like a sentinel; but this zealous manner of doing it revealed to the company that he had been ordered thither; and at that she colored. And now she began to read her Gerard, their Gerard, to their eager ears, in a mellow but clear voice, so soft, so earnest, so thrilling, her very soul seemed to cling about each precious sound. It was a voice as of a woman's bosom set speaking by Heaven itself.

"I do nothing doubt, my Margaret, that, long ere this shall meet thy beloved eyes, Denys, my most dear friend, will have sought thee out, and told thee the manner of our unlooked-for and most tearful parting. Therefore I will e'en begin at that most doleful day. What befell him after, poor faithful soul, fain, fain would I hear, but may not. But I pray for him day and night, next after thee, dearest. Friend more stanch and loving had not David in Jonathan than I in him. Be good to him for poor Gerard's sake."

At these words, which came quite unexpectedly to him, Denys leaned his head on Margaret's high chair, and groaned aloud.

She turned quickly as she sat, and found his hand, and pressed it.

And so the sweetheart and the friend held hands while the sweetheart read.

"I went forward all dizzied, like one in an ill dream; and presently a gentleman came up with his servants, all on horseback, and had like to have rid o'er me. And he drew rein at the brow of the hill, and sent his armed men back to rob me. They robbed me civilly enough; and took my purse and the last copper, and rid gayly away. I wandered stupid on, a friendless pauper."

There was a general sigh, followed by an oath from Denys.

"Presently a strange dimness came o'er me, I lay down to sleep on the snow. 'Twas ill done, and with store of wolves hard by. Had I loved thee as thou dost deserve, I had shown more manhood. But oh, sweet love, the drowsiness that did crawl o'er me desolate, and benumb me, was more than nature. And so I slept; and but that God was better to us than I to thee or to myself, from that sleep I ne'er had waked; so all do say. I had slept an hour or two, as I suppose, but no more,

when a hand did shake me rudely. I awoke to my troubles. And there stood a servant girl in her holiday suit. 'Are ye mad,' quoth she, in seeming choler, 'to sleep in snow, and under wolves' nosen? Art weary o' life, and not long weaned? Come, now,' said she, more kindly, 'get up like a good lad;' so I did rise up. 'Are ye rich, or are ye poor?' But I stared at her as one amazed. 'Why, 'tis easy of reply,' quoth she. 'Are ye rich, or are ye poor?' Then I gave a great loud cry; that she did start back. 'Am I rich, or am I poor? Had ye asked me an hour agone, I had said I am rich. But now I am so poor as sure earth beareth on her bosom none poorer. An hour agone I was rich in a friend, rich in money, rich in hope and spirits of youth; but now the Bastard of Burgundy hath taken my friend, and another gentleman my purse; and I can neither go forward to Rome nor back to her I left in Holland. I am poorest of the poor.' 'Alack!' said the wench. 'Natheless, an ye had been rich ye might ha' lain down again in the snow for any use I had for ye; and then I trow ye had soon fared out o' this world as bare as ye came into 't. But, being poor, you are our man; so come wi' me. Then I went because she bade me, and because I recked not now whither I went. And she took me to a fine house hard by, and into a noble dining-hall hung with black; and there was set a table with many dishes, and but one plate and one chair. 'Fall to!' said she, in a whisper. 'What, alone?' said I. 'Alone? And which of us, think ye, would eat out of the same dish with ye? Are we robbers o' the dead?' Then she speered where I was born. 'At Tergou,' said I. Says she, 'and when a gentleman dies in that country, serve they not the dead man's dinner up as usual, till he be in the ground, and set some poor man down to it?' I told her, nay. She blushed for us then. 'Here they were

better Christians.' So I behooved to sit down. But small was my heart for meat. Then this kind lass sat by me and poured me out wine; and, tasting it, it cut me to the heart Denys was not there to drink with me. He doth so love good wine, and women good, bad, or indifferent. The rich, strong wine curled round my sick heart; and that day first I did seem to glimpse why folk in trouble run to drink so. She made me eat of every dish. 'Twas unlucky to pass one. Nought was here but her master's *daily* dinner.' 'He had a good stomach, then,' said I. 'Ay, lad, and a good heart. Leastways, so we all say now he is dead; but, being alive, no word on't e'er heard I.' So I did eat as a bird, nibbling of every dish. And she hearing me sigh, and seeing me like to choke at the food, took pity and bade me be of good cheer. I should sup and lie there that night. And she went to the hind, and he gave me a right good bed; and I told him all, and asked him would the law give me back my purse. 'Law!' quoth he; 'law there was none for the poor in Burgundy. Why, 'twas the cousin of the lady of the manor, he that had robbed me. He knew the wild spark. The matter must be judged before the lady; and she was quite young, and far more like to hang me for slandering her cousin, and a gentleman, and a handsome man, than to make him give me back my own. Inside the liberties of a town a poor man might now and then see the face of justice; but out among the grand seigneurs and dames — never. So I said, 'I'll sit down robbed rather than seek justice and find gallows.' They were all most kind to me next day: and the girl proffered me money from her small wage to help me towards Rhine."

"Oh, then, he is coming home! he is coming home!" shouted Denys, interrupting the reader. She shook her head gently at him, by way of reproof.

"I beg pardon, all the company," said he stiffly.

"'Twas a sore temptation; but, being a servant, my stomach rose against it. 'Nay, nay,' said I. She told me I was wrong. 'Twas pride out o' place; poor folk should help one another; or who on earth would? I said if I could do aught in return 'twere well; but for a free gift, nay; I was overmuch beholden already. Should I write a letter for her? 'Nay, he is in the house at present,' said she. 'Should I draw her picture, and so earn my money?' 'What, can ye?' said she. I told her I could try; and her habit would well become a picture. So she was agog to be limned, and give it her lad. And I set her to stand in a good light, and soon made sketches two, whereof I send thee one, colored at odd hours. The other I did most hastily and with little conscience daub, for which may Heaven forgive me; but time was short. They, poor things, knew no better, and were most proud and joyous; and, both kissing me after their country fashion, 'twas the hind that was her sweetheart, they did bid me God-speed; and I towards Rhine."

Margaret paused here, and gave Denys the colored drawing to hand round. It was eagerly examined by the females on account of the costume, which differed in some respects from that of a Dutch domestic; the hair was in a tight linen bag, a yellow half kerchief crossed her head from ear to ear, but threw out a rectangular point that descended to the centre of her forehead, and it met in two more points over her bosom. She wore a red kirtle with long sleeves, kilted very high in front, and showing a green farthingale and a great red leather purse hanging down over it; red stockings, yellow leathern shoes, ahead of her age; for they were low-quartered and square-toed, secured by a strap buckling over the instep, which was not uncommon, and was perhaps the rude germ of the diamond buckle to come.

Margaret continued:—

"But, oh! how I missed my Denys at every step! often I sat down on the road and groaned. And in the afternoon it chanced that I did so set me down where two roads met, and with heavy head in hand, and heavy heart, did think of thee, my poor sweetheart, and of my lost friend, and of the little house at Tergou, where they all loved me once; though now it is turned to hate."

Catherine. Alas! that he will think so.

Eli. Whisht, wife!

"And I did sigh loud, and often. And me sighing so, one came carolling like a bird adown t'other road. 'Ay, chirp and chirp,' cried I bitterly. 'Thou hast not lost sweetheart, and friend, thy father's hearth, thy mother's smile, and every penny in the world.' And at last he did so carol, and carol, I jumped up in ire to get away from his most jarring mirth. But, ere I fled from it, I looked down the path to see what could make a man so light-hearted in this weary world; and lo! the songster was a humpbacked cripple, with a bloody bandage o'er his eye, and both legs gone at the knee."

"He, he, he, he, he!" went Sybrandt, laughing and cackling.

Margaret's eyes flashed; she began to fold the letter up.

"Nay, lass," said Eli, "heed him not! Thou unmannerly cur, offer't but again, and I put thee to the door."

"Why, what was there to gibe at, Sybrandt?" remonstrated Catherine, more mildly. "Is not our Kate afflicted? and is she not the most content of us all, and singeth like a merle at times between her pains? But I am as bad as thou; prithee read on, lass, and stop our gabble wi' somewhat worth the hearkening."

"'Then,' said I, 'may this thing be?' And I took myself to task. 'Gerard, son of Eli, dost thou well to

bemoan thy lot, that hast youth and health; and here comes the wreck of nature on crutches, praising God's goodness with singing like a mavis ?' "

Catherine. There, you see.

Eli. Whisht, dame, whisht!

"And whenever he saw me, he left carolling and presently hobbled up and chanted, 'Charity, for love of Heaven, sweet master, charity,' with a whine as piteous as wind at keyhole. 'Alack, poor soul,' said I, 'charity is in my heart, but not my purse; I am poor as thou.' Then he believed me none, and to melt me undid his sleeve, and showed a sore wound on his arm, and said he, 'Poor cripple though I be, I am like to lose this eye to boot, look else.' I saw and groaned for him, and to excuse myself let him wot how I had been robbed of my last copper. Thereat he left whining all in a moment, and said, in a big manly voice, 'Then I'll e'en take a rest. Here, youngster, pull thou this strap; nay, fear not!' I pulled, and down came a stout pair of legs out of his back; and half his hump had melted away, and the wound in his eye no deeper than the bandage."

"Oh!" ejaculated Margaret's hearers, in a body.

"Whereat, seeing me astounded, he laughed in my face, and told me I was not worth gulling, and offered me his protection. 'My face was prophetic,' he said. 'Of what?' said I. 'Marry,' said he, 'that its owner will starve in this thievish land.' Travel teaches e'en the young wisdom. Time was, I had turned and fled this impostor as a pestilence; but now I listened patiently to pick up crumbs of counsel. And well I did; for nature and his adventurous life had crammed the poor knave with shrewdness and knowledge of the homelier sort — a child was I beside him. When he had turned me inside out, said he, 'Didst well to leave France and make for Germany; but think not of Holland again. Nay, on

to Augsburg and Nurnberg, the paradise of craftsmen: thence to Venice, an thou wilt. But thou wilt never bide in Italy nor any other land, having once tasted the great German cities. Why, there is but one honest country in Europe, and that is Germany; and since thou art honest, and since I am a vagabone, Germany was made for us twain.' I bade him make that good: how might one country fit true men and knaves! 'Why, thou novice,' said he, 'because in an honest land are fewer knaves to bite the honest man, and many honest men for the knave to bite. I was in luck, being honest, to have fallen in with a friendly sharp. Be my pal,' said he; 'I go to Nurnberg: we will reach it with full pouches. I'll learn ye the *cul de bois*, and the *cul de jatte*, and how to maund, and chaunt, and patter, and to raise swellings, and paint sores and ulcers on thy body would take in the divell.' I told him, shivering, I'd liever die than shame myself and my folk so."

Eli. Good lad! good lad!

"Why, what shame was it for such as I to turn beggar? Beggary was an ancient and most honorable mystery. What did holy monks, and bishops, and kings, when they would win Heaven's smile? why, wash the feet of beggars, those favorites of the saints. 'The saints were no fools,' he told me. Then he did put out his foot. 'Look at that! that was washed by the greatest king alive, Louis of France, the last Holy Thursday that was. And the next day, Friday, clapped in the stocks by the warden of a petty hamlet.' So I told him my foot should walk between such high honor and such low disgrace, on the safe path of honesty, please God. Well, then, since I had not spirit to beg, he would indulge my perversity. I should work under him; he be the head, I the fingers. And with that he set himself up like a judge, on a heap of dust by the road's side, and

questioned me strictly what I could do. I began to say I was strong and willing. 'Bah!' said he, 'so is an ox. Say, what canst do that Sir Ox cannot?' I could write; I had won a prize for it. 'Canst write as fast as the printers?' quo' he jeering. 'What else?' I could paint. 'That was better.' I was like to tear my hair to hear him say so, and me going to Rome to write. I could twang the psaltery a bit. 'That was well. Could I tell stories?' Ay, by the score. 'Then,' said he, 'I hire you from this moment.' 'What to do?' said I. 'Nought crooked, Sir Candor,' says he. 'I will feed thee all the way and find thee work; and take half thine earnings no more.' 'Agreed,' said I, and gave my hand on it. 'Now, servant,' said he, 'we will dine. But ye need not stand behind my chair, for two reasons: first, I ha' got no chair, and next, good fellowship likes me better than state.' And out of his wallet he brought flesh, fowl, and pastry, a good dozen of spices lapped in flax paper, and wine fit for a king. Ne'er feasted I better than out of this beggar's wallet, now my master. When we had well eaten, I was for going on. 'But, said he, 'servants should not drive their masters too hard, especially after feeding, for then the body is for repose, and the mind turns to contemplation;' and he lay on his back gazing calmly at the sky, and presently wondered whether there were any beggars up there. I told him I knew but of one; called Lazarus. 'Could he do the *cul de jatte* better than I?' said he, and looked quite jealous like. I told him nay; Lazarus was honest, though a beggar, and fed daily of the crumbs fal'n from a rich man's table, and the dogs licked his sores. 'Servant,' quo' he, 'I spy a foul fault in thee. Thou liest without discretion: now the end of lying being to gull, this is no better than fumbling with the divell's tail. I pray Heaven thou mayest prove to paint better than

thou cuttest whids, or I am done out of a dinner. No beggar eats crumbs, but only the fat of the land; and dogs lick not a beggar's sores, being made with spearwort, or ratsbane, or biting acids, from all which dogs, and even pigs, abhor. My sores are made after my proper receipt; but no dog would lick e'en them twice. I have made a scurvy bargain; art a cozening knave, I doubt, as well as a nincompoop.' I deigned no reply to this bundle of lies, which did accuse heavenly truth of falsehood for not being in a tale with him. He rose, and we took the road; and presently we came to a place where were two little wayside inns, scarce a furlong apart. 'Halt,' said my master. 'Their armories are sore faded — all the better. Go thou in; shun the master; board the wife; and flatter her inn sky high, all but the armories, and offer to color them dirt cheap.' So I went in and told the wife I was a painter, and would revive her armories cheap; but she sent me away with a rebuff. I to my master. He groaned. 'Ye are all fingers and no tongue,' said he; 'I have made a scurvy bargain. Come and hear me patter and flatter.' Between the two inns was a high hedge. He goes behind it a minute, and comes out a decent tradesman. We went on to the other inn, and then I heard him praise it so fulsome as the very wife did blush. 'But,' says he, 'there is one little, little fault; your armories are dull and faded. Say but the word, and for a silver franc my apprentice here, the cunningest e'er I had, shall make them bright as ever.' Whilst she hesitated, the rogue told her he had done it to a little inn hard by, and now the inn's face was like the starry firmament. 'D'ye hear that, my man?' cries she, '"The Three Frogs" have been and painted up their armories! shall "The Four Hedgehogs" be outshone by them?' So I painted, and my master stood by like a lord, advising me how to

do, and winking to me to heed him none, and I got a silver franc. And he took me back to 'The Three Frogs,' and on the way put me on a beard and disguised me, and flattered 'The Three Frogs,' and told them how he had adorned 'The Four Hedgehogs,' and into the net jumped the three poor simple frogs, and I earned another silver franc. Then we went on, and he found his crutches, and sent me forward, and showed his '*cicatrices d'emprunt*,' as he called them, and all his infirmities, at 'The Four Hedgehogs,' and got both food and money. 'Come, share and share,' quoth he: so I gave him one franc. 'I have made a good bargain,' said he. 'Art a master limner, but takest too much time.' So I let him know that in matters of honest craft things could not be done quick and well. 'Then do them quick,' quoth he. And he told me my name was Bon Bec; and I might call him Cul de Jatte, because that was his lay at our first meeting. And at the next town, my master, Cul de Jatte, bought me a psaltery, and sat himself up again by the roadside in state like him that erst judged Marsyas and Apollo, piping for vain glory. So I played a strain. 'Indifferent well, harmonious Bon Bec,' said he haughtily. 'Now, tune thy pipes.' So I did sing a sweet strain the good monks taught me; and singing it reminded poor Bon Bec, Gerard erst, of his young days and home, and brought the water to my een. But, looking up, my master's visage was as the face of a little boy whipt soundly, or sipping foulest medicine. 'Zounds! stop that belly-ache blether,' quoth he; 'that will ne'er wile a stiver out o' peasants' purses; 'twill but sour the nurses' milk, and gar the kine jump into rivers to be out of earshot on't. What, false knave, did I buy thee a fine new psaltery to be minded o' my latter end withal? Hearken! these be the songs that glad the heart, and fill the minstrel's purse.' And he sung so blasphemous

a stave, and eke so obscene, as I drew away from him a space that the lightning might not spoil the new psaltery. However, none came, being winter, and then I said, 'Master, the Lord is debonair. Held I the thunder, yon ribaldry had been thy last, thou foul-mouthed wretch.'

"'Why, Bon Bec, what is to do?' quoth he. 'I have made an ill bargain. Oh, perverse heart, that turneth from doctrine.' So I bade him keep his breath to cool his broth, ne'er would I shame my folk with singing ribald songs. 'Then,' says he sulkily, 'the first fire we light by the wayside, clap thou on the music-box! so 'twill make our pot boil for the nonce; but with your

> Good people let us peak and pine,
> Cut tristful mugs, and miaul and whine,
> Thorough our nosen chaunts divine,

never, never, never. Ye might as well go through Lorraine crying "Mulleygrubs, mulleygrubs, who'll buy my mulleygrubs!"' So we fared on, bad friends. But I took a thought, and prayed him hum me one of his naughty ditties again. Then he brightened, and broke forth into ribaldry like a nightingale. Finger in ears stuffed I. No words; nought but the bare melody. For oh, Margaret, note the sly malice of the Evil One! Still to the scurviest matter he weddeth the tunablest ditties."

Catherine. That is true as Holy Writ.

Sybrandt. How know you that, mother?

Cornelis. He, he, he!

Eli. Whisht, ye uneasy wights, and let me hear the boy. He is wiser than ye; wiser than his years.

"'What tomfoolery is this?' said he; yet he yielded to me, and soon I garnered three of his melodies; but I would not let Cul de Jatte wot the thing I meditated.

'Show not fools nor bairns unfinished work,' saith the byword. And by this time 'twas night, and a little town at hand, where we went each to his inn; for my master would not yield to put off his rags and other sores till morning; nor I to enter an inn with a tatterdemalion. So we were to meet on the road at peep of day. And, indeed, we still lodged apart, meeting at morn and parting at eve, outside each town we lay at. And waking at midnight and cogitating, good thoughts came down to me, and sudden my heart was enlightened. I called to mind that my Margaret had withstood the taking of the burgomaster's purse. 'Tis theft,' said you; 'disguise it how ye will.' But I must be wiser than my betters: and now that which I had as good as stolen, others had stolen from me. As it came, so it was gone. Then I said, 'Heaven is not cruel, but just;' and I vowed a vow, to repay our burgomaster every shilling an I could. And I went forth in the morning sad, but hopeful. I felt lighter for the purse being gone. My master was at the gate becrutched. I told him I'd liever have seen him in another disguise. 'Beggars must not be choosers,' said he. However, soon he bade me untruss him, for he felt sadly. His head swam. I told him, forcefully to deform nature thus could scarce be wholesome. He answered none; but looked scared, and hand on head. By and by he gave a groan, and rolled on the ground like a ball, and writhed sore. I was scared, and wist not what to do, but went to lift him; but his trouble rose higher and higher, he gnashed his teeth fearfully, and the foam did fly from his lips; and presently his body bended itself like a bow, and jerked and bounded many times into the air. I exorcised him; it but made him worse. There was water in a ditch hard by, not very clear; but, the poor creature struggling between life and death, I filled my hat withal, and came flying to

souse him. Then my lord laughed in my face. 'Come, Bon Bec, by thy white gills, I had not forgotten my trade.' I stood with watery hat in hand, glaring. 'Could this be feigning?' 'What else?' said he. 'Why, a real fit is the sorriest thing; but a stroke with a feather compared with mine. Art still betters nature.' 'But look, e'en now blood trickleth from your nose,' said I. 'Ay, ay, pricked my nostrils with a straw.' 'But ye foamed at the lips.' 'Oh, a little soap makes a mickle foam.' And he drew out a morsel like a bean from his mouth. 'Thank thy stars, Bon Bec,' says he, 'for leading thee to a worthy master. Each day his lesson. To-morrow we will study the *cul de bois* and other branches. To-day, own me prince of demoniacs, and indeed of all good fellows.' Then, being puffed up, he forgot yesterday's grudge, and discoursed me freely of beggars; and gave me, who eftsoons thought a beggar was a beggar, and there an end, the names and qualities of full thirty sorts of masterful and crafty mendicants in France and Germany, and England; his three provinces; for so the poor, proud knave yclept those kingdoms three; wherein his throne it was the stocks I ween. And outside the next village one had gone to dinner, and left his wheelbarrow. So says he, 'I'll tie myself in a knot, and shalt wheel me through; and what with my crippledom and thy piety, a-wheeling of thy poor old dad, we'll bleed the bumpkins of a dacha-saltee.' I did refuse. I would work for him; but no hand would have in begging. 'And wheeling an "asker" in a barrow, is not that work?' said he; 'then fling yon muckle stone in to boot; stay, I'll soil it a bit, and swear it is a chip of the holy sepulchre, and you wheeled us both from Jerusalem.' Said I, 'Wheeling a pair o' lies, one stony, one fleshy, may be work, and hard work, but honest work 'tis not. 'Tis fumbling with his

tail you wot of. And,' said I, 'master, next time you go to tempt me to knavery, speak not to me of my poor old dad.' Said I, 'You have minded me of my real father's face, the truest man in Holland. He and I are ill friends now, worse luck. But though I offend him, shame him I never will.' Dear Margaret, with this knave saying, 'your poor old dad,' it had gone to my heart like a knife. ''Tis well,' said my master gloomily; 'I have made a bad bargain.' Presently he halts, and eyes a tree by the wayside. 'Go spell me what is writ on yon tree.' So I went, and there was nought but a long square drawn in outline. I told him so. 'So much for thy monkish lore,' quoth he. A little farther, and he sent me to read a wall. There was nought but a circle scratched on the stone with a point of nail or knife, and in the circle two dots. I said so. Then said he, 'Bon Bec, that square was a warning. Some good Truand left it, that came through this village faring west: that means "dangerous." The circle with the two dots was writ by another of our brotherhood; and it signifies as how the writer, *soit* Rollin Trapu, *soit* Triboulet, *soit* Catin Cul de Bois, or what not, was *becked* for *asking* here, and lay two months in Starabin.' Then he broke forth, 'Talk of your little snivelling books that go in pouch. Three books have I, France, England, and Germany; and they are writ all over in one tongue, that my brethren of all countries understand; and that is what I call learning. So sith here they whip sores, and imprison infirmities, I to my tiring room.' And he popped behind the hedge, and came back worshipful. We passed through the village, and I sat me down on the stocks, and even as the barber's apprentice whets his razor on a block, so did I flesh my psaltery on this village, fearing great cities. I tuned it, and coursed up and down the wires nimbly with my two wooden strikers; and then chanted

loud and clear, as I had heard the minstrels in the country,

'Qui veut ouïr qui veut Savoir,'

some trash, I mind not what. And soon the villagers, male and female, thronged about me; thereat I left singing, and recited them to the psaltery a short but right merry tale out of 'The Lives of the Saints,' which it is my handbook of pleasant figments: and this ended, instantly struck up and whistled one of Cul de Jatte's devil's ditties, and played it on the psaltery to boot. Thou knowest Heaven hath bestowed on me a rare whistle, both for compass and tune. And with me whistling bright and full this sprightly air, and making the wires slow when the tune did gallop, and tripping when the tune did amble, or I did stop and shake on one note like a lark i' the air, they were like to eat me; but looking round, lo! my master had given way to his itch, and there was his hat on the ground, and copper pouring in. I deemed it cruel to whistle the bread out of poverty's pouch; so broke off and away; yet could not get clear so swift, but both men and women did slobber me sore, and smelled all of garlic. 'There, master,' said I, 'I call that cleaving the divell in twain and keeping his white half.' Said he, 'Bon Bec, I have made a good bargain.' Then he bade me stay where I was while he went to the Holy Land. I stayed, and he leaped the churchyard dike, and the sexton was digging a grave, and my master chaffered with him, and came back with a knuckle bone. But, why he clept a churchyard Holy Land, that I learned not then, but after dinner. I was colouring the armories of a little inn; and he sat by me most peaceable, a cutting, and filing, and polishing bones, sedately; so I speered was not honest work sweet? 'As rain water,' said he, mocking. 'What was he a mak

ing?' 'A pair of bones to play on with thee; and with the refuse a St. Anthony's thumb and a St. Martin's little finger, for the devout.' The vagabone! And now, sweet Margaret, thou seest our manner of life faring Rhineward. I with the two arts I had least prized or counted on for bread was welcome everywhere; too poor now to fear robbers, yet able to keep both master and man on the road. For at night I often made a portraiture of the innkeeper or his dame, and so went richer from an inn; the which it is the lot of few. But my master despised this even way of life. 'I love ups and downs,' said he. And certes he lacked them not. One day he would gather more than I in three; another, to hear his tale, it had rained kicks all day in lieu of 'saltees,' and that is pennies. Yet even then at heart he despised me for a poor mechanical soul, and scorned my arts, extolling his own, the art of feigning.

"Natheless, at odd times was he ill at his ease. Going through the town of Aix, we came upon a beggar walking, fast by one hand to a cart-tail, and the hangman a lashing his bare bloody back. He, stout knave, so whipt, did not a jot relent; but I did wince at every stroke; and my master hung his head.

"'Soon or late, Bon Bec,' quoth he. 'Soon or late.' I, seeing his haggard face, knew what he meaned. And at a town whose name hath slipped me, but 'twas on a fair river, as we came to the foot of the bridge he halted, and shuddered. 'Why, what is the coil?' said I. 'Oh, blind,' said he, 'they are justifying there.' So nought would serve him but take a boat, and cross the river by water. But 'twas out of the frying-pan, as the word goeth. For the boatmen had scarce told us the matter, and that it was a man and a woman for stealing glazed windows out of housen, and that the man was hanged at daybreak, and the quean to be drowned, when, lo! they

did fling her off the bridge, and fell in the water not far from us. And, oh! Margaret, the deadly splash! It ringeth in mine ears even now. But worse was coming; for, though tied, she came up, and cried, 'Help! help!' and I, forgetting all, and hearing a woman's voice cry 'Help!' was for leaping in to save her; and had surely done it, but the boatmen and Cul de Jatte clung round me, and in a moment the bourreau's man, that waited in a boat, came and entangled his hooked pole in her long hair, and so thrust her down and ended her. Oh! if the saints answered so our cries for help! And poor Cul de Jatte groaned; and I sat sobbing, and beat my breast, and cried, 'Of what hath God made men's hearts?'"

The reader stopped, and the tears trickled down her cheeks. Gerard crying in Lorraine, made her cry at Rotterdam. The leagues were no more to her heart than the breadth of a room.

Eli, softened by many touches in the letter, and by the reader's womanly graces, said kindly enough, "Take thy time, lass. And methinks some of ye might find her a creepie to rest her foot, and she so near her own trouble."

"I'd do more for her than that an I durst," said Catherine. "Here, Cornelis," and she held out her little wooden stool, and that worthy, who hated Margaret worse than ever, had to take the creepie and put it carefully under her foot.

"You are very kind, dame," she faltered. "I will read on; 'tis all I can do for you in turn.

"Thus seeing my master ashy and sore shaken, I deemed this horrible tragic act came timeously to warn him, so I strove sore to turn him from his ill ways, discoursing of sinners and their lethal end. 'Too late!' said he, 'too late!' and gnashed his teeth. Then I told

him 'too late was the divell's favorite whisper in repentant ears. Said I—

'The Lord is débonair,
Let sinners nought despair.'

'Too late!' said he, and gnashed his teeth, and writhed his face, as though vipers were biting his inward parts. But, dear heart, his was a mind like running water. Ere we cleared the town he was carolling; and outside the gate hung the other culprit, from the bough of a little tree, and scarce a yard above the ground. And that stayed my vagabone's music. But, ere we had gone another furlong, he feigned to have dropped his rosary, and ran back, with no good intent as you shall hear. I strolled on very slowly, and often halting, and presently he came stumping up on one leg, and that bandaged. I asked him how he could contrive that, for 'twas masterly done. 'Oh, that was his mystery. Would I know that, I must join the brotherhood.' And presently we did pass a narrow lane, and at the mouth on't espied a written stone, telling beggars by a word like a wee pitchfork to go that way. ''Tis yon farm-house,' said he: 'bide thou at hand.' And he went to the house, and came back with money, food, and wine. 'This lad did the business,' said he, slapping his one leg proudly. Then he undid the bandage, and with prideful face showed me a hole in his calf you could have put your neef in. Had I been strange to his tricks, here was a leg had drawn my last penny. Presently another farm-house by the road. He made for it. I stood, and asked myself, should I run away and leave him, not to be ashamed in my own despite by him? But, while I doubted, there was a great noise, and my master well cudgelled by the farmer and his men, came towards me hobbling and halloaing, for the peasants had layed on heartily. But more trouble

was at his heels. Some mischievous wight loosed a dog as big as a jackass colt, and came roaring after him, and downed him momently. I, deeming the poor rogue's death certain, and him least fit to die, drew my sword and ran shouting. But, ere I could come near, the muckle dog had torn away his bad leg, and ran growling to his lair with it; and Cul de Jatte slipped his knot, and came running like a lapwing, with his hair on end, and so striking with both crutches before and behind at unreal dogs as 'twas like a wind-mill crazed. He fled adown the road. I followed leisurely, and found him at dinner. 'Curse the quiens,' said he. And not a word all dinner time but 'Curse the quiens!'

"I said, I must know who they were, before I would curse them.

"'Quiens? why, that was dogs, And I knew not even that much? He had made a bad bargain. Well, well,' said he, 'to-morrow we shall be in Germany. There the folk are music-bitten, and they molest not beggars, unless they fake to boot, and then they drown us out of hand that moment, curse 'em!' We came to Strasburgh. And I looked down Rhine with longing heart. The stream how swift! It seemed running to clip Sevenbergen to its soft bosom. With but a piece of timber and an oar I might drift at my ease to thee, sleeping yet gliding still. 'Twas a sore temptation. But the fear of ill welcome from my folk, and of the neighbors' sneers, and the hope of coming back to thee victorious, not, as now I must, defeated and shamed, and thee with me, it did withhold me; and so, with many sighs, and often turning of the head to look on beloved Rhine, I turned sorrowful face and heavy heart towards Augsburg."

"Alas, dame, alas! Good master Eli, forgive me! But I ne'er can win over this part all at one time. It taketh my breath away. Well-a-day! Why did he not

listen to his heart? Had he not gone through peril enow, sorrow enow? Well-a-day! well-a-day!"

The letter dropped from her hand, and she drooped like a wounded lily.

Then there was a clatter on the floor, and it was little Kate going on her crutches, with flushed face, and eyes full of pity, to console her. "Water, mother," she cried. "I am afeard she shall swoon."

"Nay, nay, fear me not," said Margaret, feebly. "I will not be so troublesome. Thy good-will it maketh me stouter hearted, sweet mistress Kate. For, if thou carest how I fare, sure Heaven is not against me."

Catherine. D'ye hear that, my man?

Eli. Ay, wife, I hear; and mark to boot.

Little Kate went back to her place, and Margaret read on. "The Germans are fonder of armorials than the French. So I found work every day. And, whiles I wrought, my master would leave me, and doff his raiment and don his rags, and other infirmities, and cozen the world, which he did clepe it 'plucking of the goose:' this done, would meet me and demand half my earnings; and with restless, piercing eye ask me would I be so base as cheat my poor master by making three parts in lieu of two, till I threatened to lend him a cuff to boot in requital of his suspicion; and thenceforth took his due, with feigned confidence in my good faith, the which his dancing eye belied. Early in Germany we had a quarrel. I had seen him buy a skull of a jailer's wife, and mighty zealous a-polishing it. Thought I, 'How can he carry yon memento, and not repent, seeing where ends his way?' Presently I did catch him selling it to a woman for the head of St. Barnabas, with a tale had cozened an Ebrew. So I snatched it out of their hands, and trundled it into the ditch. 'How, thou impious knave,' said I, 'wouldst sell for a saint the skull of some dead thief, thy

brother?' He slunk away. But shallow she did crawl after the skull, and with apron dust it reverently for Barnabas, and it Barabbas; and so home with it. Said I, '*non vult anser velli, sed populus vult decipi.*'"

Catherine. Oh, the goodly Latin!

Eli. What meaneth it?

Catherine. Nay, I know not: but 'tis Latin: is not that enow? He was the flower of the flock.

"Then I to him, 'Take now thy psaltery, and part we here, for art a walking prison, a walking hell.' But lo! my master fell on his knees, and begged me for pity's sake not to turn him off. 'What would become of him? He did so love honesty.' 'Thou love honesty?' said I. 'Ay,' said he, 'not to enact it; the saints forbid. But to look on. 'Tis so fair a thing to look on. Alas, good Bon Bec,' said he; 'hadst starved peradventure but for me. Kick not down thy ladder! Call ye that just? Nay, calm thy choler! Have pity on me! I must have a pal: and how could I bear one like myself after one so simple as thou? He might cut my throat for the money that is hid in my belt. 'Tis not much; 'tis not much. With thee I walk at mine ease; with a sharp I dare not go before in a narrow way. Alas! forgive me. Now I know where in thy bonnet lurks the bee, I will ware his sting; I will but pluck the secular goose.' 'So be it,' said I. 'And example was contagious: he should be a true man by then we reached Nurnberg. 'Twas a long way to Nurnberg.' Seeing him so humble, I said, 'Well, doff rags, and make thyself decent; 'twill help me forget what thou art.' And he did so; and we sat down to our nonemete. Presently came by a reverend palmer with hat stuck round with cockle shells from Holy Land, and great rosary of beads like eggs of teal, and sandals for shoes. And he leaned aweary on his long staff, and offered us a shell apiece. My master would none; but

I, to set him a better example, took one, and for it gave the poor pilgrim two batzen, and had his blessing. And he was scarce gone, when we heard savage cries, and came a sorry sight, one leading a wild woman in a chain, all rags, and howling like a wolf. And when they came nigh us, she fell to tearing her rags to threads. The man sought an alms of us, and told us his hard case. 'Twas his wife, stark, raving mad; and he could not work in the fields, and leave her in his house to fire it, nor cure her could he without the Saintys help; and had vowed six pounds of wax to St. Anthony to heal her, and so was fain beg of charitable folk for the money. And now she espied us, and flew at me with her long nails, and I was cold with fear, so devilish showed her face and rolling eyes and nails like birdys talons. But he with the chain checked her sudden, and with his whip did cruelly lash her for it, that I cried, 'Forbear! forbear! She knoweth not what she doth;' and gave him a batz. And being gone, said I, 'Master, of those twain I know not which is the more pitiable.' And he laughed in my face. 'Behold thy justice, Bon Bec,' said he. 'Thou railest on thy poor, good, within-an-ace-of-honest master, and bestowest alms on a "vopper."' 'Vopper,' said I, 'what is a vopper?' 'Why, a trull that feigns madness. That was one of us, that sham maniac, and wow but she did it clumsily. I blushed for her and thee. Also gavest two batzen for a shell from Holy Land, that came no farther than Normandy. I have culled them myself on that coast by scores, and sold them to pilgrims true and pilgrims false, to gull flats like thee withal.' 'What!' said I; 'that reverend man?' 'One of us!' cried Cul de Jatte; 'one of us! In France we call them "Coquillarts," but here "Calmierers." Railest on me for selling a false relic now and then, and wastest thy earnings on such as sell nought else. I tell thee, Bon Bec,' said he,

'there is not one true relic on earth's face. The saints died a thousand years agone, and their bones mixed with the dust; but the trade in relics, it is of yesterday; and there are forty thousand tramps in Europe live by it; selling relics of forty or fifty bodies; oh, threadbare lie! And of the true Cross enow to build Cologne Minster. Why, then, may not poor Cul de Jatte turn his penny with the crowd? Art but a scurvy, tyrannical servant to let thy poor master from his share of the swag with your whoreson pilgrims, palmers, and friars, black, gray, and crutched; for all these are of our brotherhood, and of our art, only masters they, and we but poor apprentices, in guild.' For his tongue was an ell and a half.

"'A truce to thy irreverend sophistries,' said I, 'and say what company is this a-coming.' 'Bohemians,' cried he. 'Ay, ay; this shall be the rest of the band.' With that came along so motley a crew as never your eyes beheld, dear Margaret. Marched at their head one with a banner on a steel-pointed lance, and girded with a great long sword, and in velvet doublet and leathern jerkin, the which stuffs ne'er saw I wedded afore on mortal flesh, and a gay feather in his lordly cap, and a couple of dead fowls at his back, the which, an the spark had come by honestly, I am much mistook. Him followed wives and babes on two lean horses, whose flanks still rattled like parchment drum, being beaten by kettles and caldrons. Next an armed man a-riding of a horse, which drew a cart full of females and children: and in it, sitting backwards, a lusty, lazy knave, lance in hand, with his luxurious feet raised on a holy-water pail, that lay along, and therein a cat, new kittened, sat glowing o'er her brood, and sparks for eyes. And the cart-horse cavalier had on his shoulders a round bundle, and thereon did perch a cock and crowed with zeal, poor ruffler, proud of his brave feathers as the rest, and haply with more reason,

being his own. And on an ass another wife and new-born child; and one poor quean a-foot scarce dragged herself along, so near her time was she, yet held two little ones by the hand, and helplessly helped them on the road. And the little folk were just a farce; some rode sticks, with horses' heads, between their legs, which pranced and caracoled, and soon wearied the riders so sore, they stood stock still and wept, which cavaliers were presently taken into cart and cuffed. And one, more grave, lost in a man's hat and feather, walked in Egyptian darkness, handed by a girl; another had the great saucepan on his back, and a tremendous three-footed clay pot sat on his head and shoulders, swallowing him so as he too went darkling, led by his sweetheart three foot high. When they were gone by, and we had both laughed lustily, said I, 'Natheless, master, my bowels they yearn for one of that tawdry band, even for the poor wife so near the down-lying, scarce able to drag herself, yet still, poor soul, helping the weaker on the way.'

Catherine. Nay, nay, Margaret. Why, wench, pluck up heart. Certes thou art no Bohemian.

Kate. Nay, mother, 'tis not that, I trow, but her father. And, dear heart, why take notice to put her to the blush?

Richart. So I say.

"And he derided me. 'Why, that is a "biltreger,"' said he, 'and you waste your bowels on a pillow, or so forth.' I told him he lied. 'Time would show,' said he, 'wait till they camp.' And rising after meat and meditation, and travelling forward, we found them camped between two great trees on a common by the wayside, and they had lighted a great fire, and on it was their caldron; and, one of the trees slanting o'er the fire, a kid hung down by a chain from the tree-fork to the fire, and

in the fork was wedged an urchin turning still the chain to keep the meat from burning, and a gay spark with a feather in his cap cut up a sheep; and another had spitted a leg of it on a wooden stake; and a woman ended chanticleer's pride with wringing of his neck. And under the other tree four rufflers played at cards and quarrelled, and no word sans oath; and of these lewd gamblers one had cockles in his hat, and was my reverend pilgrim. And a female, young and comely, and dressed like a butterfly, sat and mended a heap of dirty rags. And Cul de Jatte said, 'Yon is the "vopper,"' and I looked incredulous and looked again, and it was so, and at her feet sat he that had so late lashed her; but I ween he had wist where to strike, or woe betide him; and she did now oppress him sore, and made him thread her very needle, the which he did with all humility; so was their comedy turned seamy side without: and Cul de Jatte told me 'twas still so with 'voppers' and their men in camp; they would don their bravery though but for an hour, and with their tinsel, empire, and the man durst not the least gainsay the 'vopper,' or she would turn him off at these times, as I my master, and take another tyrant more submissive. And my master chuckled over me. Natheless we soon espied a wife set with her back against the tree, and her hair down, and her face white, and by her side a wench held up to her eye a new-born babe, with words of cheer, and the rough fellow, her husband, did bring her hot wine in a cup, and bade her take courage. And, just o'er the place she sat, they had pinned from bough to bough of those neighboring trees two shawls, and blankets two, together, to keep the drizzle off her. And so had another poor little rogue come into the world: and by her own particular folk tended gypsywise, but of the roasters, and boilers, and voppers, and gamblers, no more noticed, no, not for a

single moment, than sheep which droppeth her lamb in a field, by travellers upon the way. Then said I, 'What of thy foul suspicions, master? over-knavery blinds the eye as well as over-simplicity.' And he laughed and said, 'Triumph, Bon Bec, triumph. The chances were nine in ten against thee.' Then I did pity her, to be in a crowd at such a time; but he rebuked me. 'I should pity rather your queens and royal duchesses, which by law are condemned to groan in a crowd of nobles and courtiers, and do writhe with shame as well as sorrow, being come of decent mothers, whereas these gypsy women have no more shame under their skins than a wolf ruth, or a hare valor. And, Bon Bec,' quoth he, 'I espy in thee a lamentable fault. Wastest thy bowels. Wilt have none left for thy poor good master which doeth thy will by night and day.' Then we came forward; and he talked with the men in some strange Hebrew cant whereof no word knew I; and the poor knaves bade us welcome and denied us nought. With them, and all they had, 'twas lightly come and lightly go; and when we left them my master said to me, 'This is thy first lesson, but to-night we shall lie at Hansburgh. Come with me to the "rotboss" there, and I'll show thee all our folk and their lays, and especially "the lossners," "the dutzers," "the schleppers," "the gickisses," "the schwanfelders," whom in England we call "shivering Jemmies," "the süntvegers," "the schwiegers," "the joners," "the sessel-degers," "the gennscherers," in France "marcandiers or rifodés," "the veranerins," "the stabulers," with a few foreigners like ourselves, such as "pietres," "francmitoux," "polissons," "malingreux," "traters," "rufflers," "whipjalks," "dommerars," "glymmerars," "jarkmen," "patricos," "swadders," "autem morts" "walking morts," '—'Enow,' cried I, stopping him, 'art as gleesome as the evil one a-counting of his

imps. I'll jot down in my tablet all these caitiffs and their accursed names: for knowledge is knowledge. But go among them, alive or dead, that will I not with my good will. Moreover,' said I, 'what need? since I have a companion in thee who is all the knaves on earth in one?' and thought to abash him; but his face shone with pride, and hand on breast he did bow low to me. 'If thy wit be scant, good Bon Bec, thy manners are a charm. I have made a good bargain.' So he to the 'rotboss,' and I to a decent inn, and sketched the landlord's daughter by candle-light, and started at morn batzen three the richer, but could not find my master, so loitered slowly on, and presently met him coming west for me, and cursing the quiens. Why so? Because he could blind the culls but not the quiens. At last I prevailed on him to leave cursing and canting, and tell me his adventure. Said he, 'I sat outside the gate of yon monastery, full of sores, which I showed the passers-by. Oh, Bon Bec, beautifuller sores you never saw: and it rained coppers in my hat. Presently the monks came home from some procession, and the convent dogs ran out to meet them, curse the quiens!' 'What, did they fall on thee and bite thee, poor soul?' 'Worse, worse, dear Bon Bec. Had they bitten me I had earned silver. But the great idiots, being, as I think, puppies, or little better, fell on me where I sat, downed me, and fell a-licking my sores among them. As thou, false knave, didst swear the whelps in heaven licked the sores of Lazybones, a beggar of old.' 'Nay, nay,' said I, 'I said no such thing. But tell me, since they bit me not, but sportfully licked thee, what harm?" 'What harm, noodle? why, the sores came off. 'How could that be?' 'How could aught else be? and them just fresh put on. Did I think he was so weak as bite holes in his flesh with ratsbane? Nay, he was an artist, a painter like his servant, and had

put on sores made of pig's blood, rye meal, and glue. So when the folk saw my sores go on tongues of puppies, they laughed, and I saw cord or sack before me. So up I jumped, and shouted "A miracle! a miracle! The very dogs of this holy convent be holy, and have cured me. Good fathers," cried I, "whose day is this?" "St. Isidore's," said one. "St. Isidore," cried I, in a sort of rapture. "Why, St. Isidore is my patron saint: so that accounts." And the simple folk swallowed my miracle as those accursed quiens my wounds. But the monks took me inside and shut the gate, and put their heads together; but I have a quick ear, and one did say "*caret miraculo monasterium*," which is Greek patter I trow, leastways it is no beggar's cant. Finally they bade the lay brethren give me a hiding, and take me out a back way and put me on the road, and threatened me did I come back to the town to hand me to the magistrate and have me drowned for a plain impostor. "Profit now by the Church's grace," said they, "and mend thy ways." So forward, Bon Bec, for my life is not sure nigh hand this town.' As we went he worked his shoulders, 'Wow but the brethren laid on. And what means yon piece of monk's cant, I wonder?" So I told him the words meant 'the monastery is in want of a miracle,' but the application thereof was dark to me. 'Dark,' cried he, 'dark as noon. Why, it means they are going to work the miracle, my miracle, and gather all the grain I sowed. Therefore these blows on their benefactor's shoulders; therefore is he that wrought their scurvy miracle driven forth with stripes and threats. Oh, cozening knaves!' Said I, 'Becomes you to complain of guile.' 'Alas, Bon Bec,' said he, 'I but outwit the simple; but these monks would pluck Lucifer of his wing feathers.' And went a league bemoaning himself that he was not convent-bred like his servant. 'He

would put it to more profit;' and railing on quiens. 'And as for those monks, there was one Above.' 'Certes,' said I, 'there is one Above. What then?' 'Who will call those shavelings to compt, one day,' quoth he. 'And all deceitful men,' said I. At one that afternoon I got armories to paint: so my master took the yellow jaundice and went begging through the town, and with his oily tongue, and saffron-water face, did fill his hat. Now in all the towns are certain licensed beggars, and one of these was an old favorite with the townsfolk: had his station at St. Martin's porch, the greatest church: a blind man: they called him blind Hans. He saw my master drawing coppers on the other side the street, and knew him by his tricks for an impostor, so sent and warned the constables, and I met my master in the constables' hands, and going to his trial in the town hall. I followed and many more; and he was none abashed, neither by the pomp of justice, nor memory of his misdeeds, but demanded his accuser like a trumpet. And blind Hans's boy came forward, but was sifted narrowly by my master, and stammered and faltered, and owned he had seen nothing, but only carried blind Hans's tale to the chief constable. 'This is but hearsay,' said my master. 'Lo ye now, here standeth Misfortune backbit by Envy. But stand thou forth, blind Envy, and vent thine own lie.' And blind Hans behooved to stand forth, sore against his will. Him did my master so press with questions, and so pinch and torture, asking him again and again how, being blind, he could see all that befell, and some that befell not, across a way; and why, an he could not see, he came there holding up his perjured hand, and maligning the misfortunate, that at last he groaned aloud and would utter no word more. And an alderman said, 'In sooth, Hans, ye are to blame; hast cast more dirt of suspicion on thyself than on him.' But the burgomaster,

a wondrous fat man, and methinks of his fat some had gotten into his head, checked him, and said, 'Nay, Hans we know this many years, and, be he blind or not, he hath passed for blind so long, 'tis all one. Back to thy porch, good Hans, and let the strange varlet leave the town incontinent on pain of whipping.' Then my master winked to me; but there rose a civic officer in his gown of state and golden chain, a dignity with us lightly prized, and even shunned of some, but in Germany and France much courted, save by condemned malefactors; to wit the hangman; and says he, 'An't please you, first let us see why he weareth his hair so thick and low.' And his man went and lifted Cul de Jatte's hair, and lo the upper gristle of both ears was gone. 'How is this, knave?' quoth the burgomaster. My master said, carelessly, he minded not precisely: his had been a life of misfortunes and losses. 'When a poor soul has lost the use of his leg, noble sirs, these more trivial woes rest lightly in his memory.' When he found this would not serve his turn, he named two famous battles, in each of which he had lost half an ear, a-fighting like a true man against traitors and rebels. But the hangman showed them the two cuts were made at one time, and by measurement. ''Tis no bungling soldier's work, my masters,' said he, ''tis ourn.' Then the burgomaster gave judgment: 'The present charge is not proven against thee; but, an thou beest not guilty now, thou hast been at other times, witness thine ears. Wherefore I send thee to prison for one month, and to give a florin towards the new hall of the guilds now a-building, and to be whipt out of the town, and pay the hangman's fee for the same.' And all the aldermen approved, and my master was haled to prison with one look of anguish. It did strike my bosom. I tried to get speech of him, but the jailer denied me. But lingering near the jail I heard a whistle,

and there was Cul de Jatte at a narrow window twenty feet from earth. I went under, and he asked me what made I there? I told him I was loath to go forward and not bid him farewell. He seemed quite amazed; but soon his suspicious soul got the better. That was not all mine errand. I told him not all: the psaltery: 'Well, what of that?' 'Twas not mine, but his; I would pay him the price of it. 'Then throw me a rix-dollar,' said he. I counted out my coins, and they came to a rix-dollar and two batzen. I threw up his money in three throws, and when he had got it all he said, softly, 'Bon Bec.' 'Master,' said I. Then the poor rogue was greatly moved. 'I thought ye had been mocking me,' said he; 'oh, Bon Bec, Bon Bec, if I had found the world like thee at starting I had put my wit to better use, and I had not lain here.' Then he whimpered out, 'I gave not quite a rix-dollar for the jingler;' and threw me back that he had gone to cheat me of; honest for once, and over late; and so, with many sighs, bade me Godspeed. Thus did my master, after often baffling men's justice, fall by their injustice; for his lost ears proved not his guilt only, but of that guilt the bitter punishment: so the account was even; yet they for his chastisement did chastise him. Natheless he was a parlous rogue. Yet he holp to make a man of me. Thanks to his good wit I went forward richer far with my psaltery and brush, than with yon as good as stolen purse; for that must have run dry in time, like a big trough, but these a little fountain."

Richart. How pregnant his reflections be; and but a curly pated lad when last I saw him. Asking your pardon, mistress. Prithee read on.

"One day I walked alone, and, sooth to say, light-hearted, for mine honest Denys sweetened the air on the way; but poor Cul de Jatte poisoned it. The next day, passing a grand house, out came on prancing steeds a

gentleman in brave attire and two servants; they overtook me. The gentleman bade me halt. I laughed in my sleeve; for a few batzen were all my store. He bade me doff my doublet and jerkin. Then I chuckled no more. 'Bethink you, my lord,' said I, ''tis winter. How may a poor fellow go bare and live?' So he told me I shot mine arrow wide of his thought; and off with his own gay jerkin, richly furred, and doublet to match, and held them forth to me. Then a servant let me know it was a penance. 'His lordship had had the ill luck to slay his cousin in their cups.' Down to my shoes he changed with me; and sat me on his horse like a popinjay, and fared by my side in my worn weeds, with my psaltery on his back. And said he, 'Now, good youth, thou art Count Detstein; and I, late count, thy servant. Play thy part well, and help me save my blood-stained soul! Be haughty and choleric as any noble; and I will be as humble as I may.' I said I would do my best to play the noble. But what should I call him? He bade me call him nought but servant. That would mortify him most, he wist. We rode on a long way in silence: for I was meditating this strange chance, that from a beggar's servant had made me master to a count, and also cudgelling my brains how best I might play the master, without being run through the body all at one time like his cousin. For I mistrusted sore my spark's humility; your German nobles being, to my knowledge, proud as Lucifer, and choleric as fire. As for the servants, they did slyly grin to one another to see their master so humbled" —

"Ah! what is that?"

A lump, as of lead, had just bounced against the door, and the latch was fumbled with unsuccessfully. Another bounce, and the door swung inwards with Giles arrayed in cloth-of-gold sticking to it like a wasp. He landed on

the floor and was embraced; but, on learning what was going on, trumpeted that he would much liever hear of Gerard than gossip.

Sybrandt pointed to a diminutive chair.

Giles showed his sense of this civility by tearing the said Sybrandt out of a very big one, and there ensconced himself gorgeous and glowing. Sybrandt had to wedge himself into the one which was too small for the magnificent dwarf's soul, and Margaret resumed. But as this part of the letter was occupied with notices of places, all which my reader probably knows, and, if not, can find handled at large in a dozen well-known books, from Munster to Murray, I skip the topography, and hasten to that part where it occurred to him to throw his letter into a journal. The personal narrative that intervened may be thus condensed.

He spoke but little at first to his new companions, but listened to pick up their characters. Neither his noble servant nor *his* servants could read or write: and as he often made entries in his tablets, he impressed them with some awe. One of his entries was "*Le peu que sont les hommes.*" For he found the surly innkeepers licked the very ground before him now; nor did a soul suspect the hosier's son in the count's feathers, nor the count in the minstrel's weeds. This seems to have surprised him; for he enlarged on it with the *naïveté* and pomposity of youth. At one place, being humbly requested to present the inn with his armorial bearings, he consented loftily; but painted them himself, to mine host's wonder, who thought he lowered himself by handling brush. The true count stood grinning by, and held the paint-pot, while the sham count painted a shield with three red herrings rampant under a sort of Maltese cross made with two ell-measures. At first his plebeian servants were insolent. But this coming to the notice of his

noble one, he forgot what he was doing penance for, and drew his sword to cut off their ears, heads included. But Gerard interposed and saved them, and rebuked the count severely. And finally they all understood one another, and the superior mind obtained its natural influence. He played the barbarous noble of that day vilely. For his heart would not let him be either tyrannical or cold. Here were three human beings. He tried to make them all happier than he was; held them ravished with stories and songs, and set Herr Penitent and Co. dancing with his whistle and psaltery. For his own convenience he made them ride and tie, and thus pushed rapidly through the country, travelling generally fifteen leagues a day.

DIARY.

"This first of January I observed a young man of the country to meet a strange maiden, and kissed his hand, and then held it out to her. She took it with a smile, and lo! acquaintance made; and babbled like old friends. Greeting so pretty and delicate I ne'er did see. Yet were they both of the baser sort. So the next lass I saw a-coming, I said to my servant lord, 'For further penance bow thy pride: go meet yon base-born girl; kiss thy homicidal hand, and give it her, and hold her in discourse as best ye may.' And my noble servant said humbly, 'I shall obey my lord.' And we drew rein and watched while he went forward, kissed his hand, and held it out to her. Forthwith she took it smiling, and was most affable with him, and he with her. Presently came up a band of her companions. So this time I bade him doff his bonnet to them, as though they were empresses; and he did so. And lo! the lasses drew up as stiff as hedge-stakes, and moved not nor spake."

Denys. Aie! aie! aie! Pardon, the company.

"This surprises me none; for so they did discountenance poor Denys. And that whole day I wore in experimenting these German lasses; and 'twas still the same. An ye doff bonnet to them they stiffen into statues; distance for distance. But accost them with honest freedom, and with that customary, and, though rustical, most gracious proffer, of the kissed hand, and they withhold neither their hands in turn nor their acquaintance in an honest way. Seeing which I vexed myself that Denys was not with us to prattle with them; he is so fond of women." ("Are you fond of *women*, Denys?") And the reader opened two great violet eyes upon him with gentle surprise.

Denys. Ahem! he says so, she-comrade. By Hannibal's helmet 'tis their fault, not mine. They *will* have such soft voices, and white skins, and sunny hair, and dark blue eyes, and —

Margaret (reading suddenly). Which their affability I put to profit thus. I asked them how they made shift to grow roses in Yule? For know, dear Margaret, that throughout Germany the baser sort of lasses wear for head-dress naught but a 'crantz,' or wreath of roses, encircling their bare hair, as laurel Cæsar's; and though of the worshipful scorned, yet is braver, I wist, to your eye and mine which painters be, though sorry ones, than the gorgeous, uncouth, mechanical head-gear of the time, and adorns, not hides, her hair, that goodly ornament fitted to her head by craft divine. So the good lasses, being questioned close, did let me know the rosebuds are cut in summer and laid then in great clay pots, thus ordered: first bay salt, then a row of buds, and over that row bay salt sprinkled: then another row of buds placed crosswise; for they say it is death to the buds to touch one another; and so on, buds and salt in layers. Then each pot is covered and soldered tight, and kept in cool

cellar. And on Saturday night the master of the house, or mistress, if master be none, opens a pot, and doles the rosebuds out to every female in the house, high or low, withouten grudge; then solders it up again. And such as of these buds would full-blown roses make, put them in warm water a little space, or else in the stove, and then with tiny brush and soft, wetted in Rhenish wine, do coax them till they ope their folds. And some perfume them with rosewater. For, alack, their smell it is fled with the summer; and only their fair bodyes lie withouten soul, in tomb of clay, awaiting resurrection.

"And some with the roses and buds mix nutmegs gilded, but not by my good will; for gold, brave in itself, cheek by jowl with roses, is but yellow earth. And it does the eye's heart good to see these fair heads of hair come, blooming with roses, over snowy roads, and by snow-capped hedges, setting winter's beauty by the side of summer's glory. For what so fair as winter's lilies, snow yclept, and what so brave as roses? And shouldst have had a picture here, but for their superstition. Leaned a lass in Sunday garb, cross-ankled, against her cottage corner, whose low roof was snow-clad, and with her crantz did seem a summer flower sprouting from winter's bosom. I drew rein, and out pencil and brush to limn her for thee. But the simpleton, fearing the evil eye, or glamour, claps both hands to her face and flies panic-stricken. But, indeed, they are not more superstitious than the Sevenbergen folk, which take thy father for a magician. Yet softly, sith at this moment I profit by this darkness of their minds; for, at first, sitting down to write this diary, I could frame nor thought nor word, so harried and deaved was I with noise of mechanical persons, and hoarse laughter at dull jests of one of these parti-colored 'fools,' which are so rife in Germany. But oh, sorry wit, that is driven to

the poor resource of pointed ear-caps, and a green and yellow body. True wit, methinks, is of the mind. We met in Burgundy an honest wench, though over free for my palate, a chambermaid, had made havoc of all these zanies, droll by brute force. Oh, digressor! Well, then, I to be rid of roaring rusticalls, and mindless jests, put my finger in a glass and drew on the table a great watery circle; whereat the rusticalls did look askant, like venison at a cat; and in that circle a smaller circle. The rusticalls held their peace; and beside these circles cabalistical, I laid down on the table solemnly yon parchment deed I had out of your house. The rusticalls held their breath. Then did I look as glum as might be, and muttered slowly thus: '*Videamus — quam diu tu fictus morio — vosque veri stulti — audebitis — in hâc aulâ morari, strepitantes ita — et olentes — ut dulcissimæ nequeam miser scribere.*' They shook like aspens, and stole away on tiptoe one by one at first, then in a rush and jostling, and left me alone; and most sacred of all was the fool: never earned jester fairer his ass's ears. So rubbed I their foible, who first rubbed mine; for of all a traveller's foes I dread those giants twain, Sir Noise, and eke Sir Stench. The saints and martyrs forgive my peevishness. Thus I write to thee in balmy peace, and tell thee trivial things scarce worthy ink, also how I love thee, which there was no need to tell, for well thou knowest it. And, oh, dear Margaret, looking on their roses, which grew in summer, but blow in winter, I see the picture of our true affection; born it was in smiles and bliss, but soon adversity beset us sore with many a bitter blast. Yet our love hath lost no leaf, thank God, but blossoms full and fair as ever, proof against frowns, and gibes, and prison, and banishment, as those sweet German flowers a-blooming in winter's snow.

"*January* 2. — My servant, the count, finding me curious, took me to the stables of the prince that rules this part. In the first court was a horse-bath, adorned with twenty-two pillars, graven with the prince's arms; and also the horse-leech's shop, so furnished as a rich apothcary might envy. The stable is a fair quadrangle whereof three sides filled with horses of all nations. Before each horse's nose was a glazed window, with a green curtain to be drawn at pleasure, and at his tail a thick wooden pillar with a brazen shield, whence by turning of a pipe he is watered, and serves too for a cupboard to keep his comb and rubbing clothes. Each rack was iron, and each manger shining copper, and each nag covered with a scarlet mantle, and above him his bridle and saddle hung, ready to gallop forth in a minute; and not less than two hundred horses, whereof twelve score of foreign breed. And we returned to our inn full of admiration, and the two varlets said sorrowfully, 'Why were we born with two legs?' And one of the grooms that was civil, and had of me *trinkgeld*, stood now at his cottage door and asked us in. There we found his wife, and children of all ages, from five to eighteen, and had but one room to bide and sleep in, a thing pestiferous and most uncivil. Then I asked my servant, knew he this prince? Ay, did he, and had often drunk with him in a marble chamber above the stable, where, for table, was a curious and artificial rock, and the drinking vessels hang on its pinnacles, and at the hottest of the engagement a statue of a horseman in bronze came forth bearing a bowl of liquor, and he that sat nearest behooved to drain it. 'Tis well,' said I: 'now, for thy penance, whisper thou in yon prince's ear, that God hath given him his people freely, and not sought a price for them as for horses. And pray him look inside the huts at his horse-palace door, and bethink himself is it well to house his horses,

and stable his folk.' Said he, ''Twill give sore offence.' 'But,' said I, 'ye must do it discreetly and choose your time.' So he promised. And riding on we heard plaintive cries. 'Alas,' said I, 'some sore mischance hath befallen some poor soul: what may it be? And we rode up, and lo! it was a wedding feast, and the guests were plying the business of drinking, sad and silent, but ever and anon cried loud and dolefully, '*Seyte frolich!* Be merry.'

"*January* 3. — Yesterday between Nurnberg and Augsburg we parted company. I gave my lord, late servant, back his brave clothes for mine; but his horse he made me keep, and five gold pieces, and said he was still my debtor; his penance it had been slight along of me, but profitable. But his best word was this: 'I see 'tis more noble to be loved than feared.' And then he did so praise me as I blush to put on paper; yet, poor fool, would fain thou couldst hear his words, but from some other pen than mine. And the servants did heartily grasp my hand, and wish me good luck. And riding apace, yet could I not reach Augsburg till the gates were closed; but it mattered little, for this Augsburg it is an enchanted city. For a small coin one took me a long way round to a famous postern called der Einlasse. Here stood two guardians, like statues. To them I gave my name and business. They nodded me leave to knock. I knocked, and the iron gate opened with a great noise and hollow rattling of a chain, but no hand seen nor chain; and he, who drew the hidden chain, sits a butt's length from the gate; and I rode in, and the gate closed with a clang after me. I found myself in a great building with a bridge at my feet. This I rode over, and presently came to a porter's lodge, where one asked me again my name and business, then rang a bell, and a great portcullis that barred the way began to rise, drawn

by a wheel overhead, and no hand seen. Behind the portcullis was a thick oaken door studded with steel. It opened without hand, and I rode into a hall as dark as pitch. Trembling there a while, a door opened and showed me a smaller hall lighted. I rode into it; a tin goblet came down from the ceiling by a little chain; I put two batzen into it, and it went up again. Being gone, another thick door creaked and opened, and I rid through. It closed on me with a tremendous clang, and behold me in Augsburg city. I lay at an inn called 'The Three Moors,' over an hundred years old; and, this morning, according to my way of viewing towns to learn their compass and shape, I mounted the highest tower I could find, and setting my dial at my foot surveyed the beautiful city; whole streets of palaces, and churches tiled with copper burnished like gold; and the house-fronts gayly painted and all glazed, and the glass so clean and burnished as 'tis most resplendent and rare; and I, now first seeing a great citie, did crow with delight, and like cock on his ladder, and at the tower foot was taken into custody for a spy; for whilst I watched the city the watchman had watched me. The burgomaster received me courteously and heard my story; then rebuked he the officers. 'Could ye not question him yourselves, or read in his face? This is to make our city stink in strangers' report.' Then he told me my curiosity was of a commendable sort; and seeing I was a craftsman and inquisitive, bade his clerk take me among the guilds. God bless the city where the very burgomaster is cut of Solomon's cloth!

"*January* 5. — Dear Margaret, it is a noble city, and a kind mother to arts. Here they cut in wood and ivory, that 'tis like spider's work, and paint on glass, and sing angelical harmonies. Writing of books is quite gone by; here be six printers. Yet was I offered a bountiful wage

to write fairly a merchant's accounts, one Fugger, a grand and wealthy trader, and hath store of ships, yet his father was but a poor weaver. But here in commerce her very garden, men swell like mushrooms. And he bought my horse of me, and abated me not a jot, which way of dealing is not known in Holland. But, O Margaret! the workmen of all the guilds are so kind and brotherly to one another, and to me. Here, methinks, I have found the true German mind, loyal, frank, and kindly, somewhat choleric withal, but nought revengeful. Each mechanic wears a sword. The very weavers at the loom sit girded with their weapons, and all Germans on too slight occasion draw them and fight; but no treachery; challenge first, then draw, and with the edge only, mostly the face, not with Sir Point; for if in these combats one thrust at his adversary and hurt him, 'tis called *ein schelemstucke*, a heinous act; both men and women turn their backs on him; and even the judges punish thrusts bitterly, but pass over cuts. Hence in Germany be good store of scarred faces, three in five at least, and in France scarce more than one in three.

"But in arts mechanical no citizens may compare with these. Fountains in every street that play to heaven, and in the gardens seeming trees, which being approached, one standing afar touches a spring, and every twig shoots water, and souses the guests to their host's much delectation. Big culverins of war they cast with no more ado than our folk horse-shoes, and have done this fourscore years. All stuffs they weave, and linen fine as ours at home, or nearly, which elsewhere in Europe vainly shall you seek. Sir Printing Press — sore foe to poor Gerard, but to other humans beneficial — plyeth by night and day, and casteth goodly words like sower a-field; while I, poor fool, can but sow them as I saw women in France sow rye, dribbling it in the furrow

grain by grain. And of their strange mechanical skill take two examples. For ending of exemplary rogues they have a figure like a woman, seven feet high, and called Jung Frau; but lo, a spring is touched: she seizeth the poor wretch with iron arms, and opening herself, hales him inside her, and there pierces him through and through with twoscore lances. Secondly, in all great houses the spit is turned not by a scrubby boy, but by smoke. Ay, mayst well admire, and judge me a lying knave. These cunning Germans do set in the chimney a little windmill, and the smoke struggling to wend past, turns it, and from the mill a wire runs through the wall and turns the spit on wheels; beholding which I doffed my bonnet to the men of Augsburg, for who but these had ere devised to bind ye so dark and subtle a knave as Sir Smoke, and set him to roast Dame Pullet?

"This day, January 8, with three craftsmen of the town, I painted a pack of cards. They were for a senator in a hurry. I the diamonds. My queen came forth with eyes like spring violets, hair a golden brown, and witching smile. My fellow-craftsmen saw her, and put their arms round my neck and hailed me master. Oh, noble Germans! No jealousy of a brother-workman; no sour looks at a stranger; and would have me spend Sunday with them after matins; and the merchant paid me so richly, as I was ashamed to take the guerdon; and I to my inn, and tried to paint the queen of diamonds for poor Gerard; but no, she would not come like again. Luck will not be bespoke. Oh, happy rich man that hath got her! Fie! fie! Happy Gerard, that shall have herself one day, and keep house with her at Augsburg.

"*January* 8. — With my fellows, and one Veit Stoss, a wood-carver, and one Hafnagel, of the goldsmiths' guild, and their wives and lasses, to Hafnagel's cousin, a senator of this free city, and his stupendous wine-vessel.

It is ribbed like a ship, and hath been eighteen months in hand, and finished but now, and holds a hundred and fifty hogsheads, and standeth not, but lieth; yet even so ye get not on his back withouten ladders two, of thirty steps. And we sat about the miraculous mass, and drank Rhenish from it, drawn by a little artificial pump, and the lasses pinned their crantzes to it, and we danced round it, and the senator danced on its back, but with drinking of so many garausses, lost his footing and fell off, glass in hand, and broke an arm and a leg in the midst of us. So scurvily ended our drinking bout for this time.

"*January* 10. — This day started for Venice with a company of merchants, and among them him who had desired me for his scrivener; and so we are now agreed, I to write at night the letters he shall dict, and other matters, he to feed and lodge me on the road. We be many and armed, and soldiers with us to boot, so fear not the thieves which men say lie on the borders of Italy. But an if I find the printing press at Venice I trow I shall not go unto Rome, for man may not vie with iron.

"*Imprimit una dies quantum non scribitur anno.* And, dearest, something tells me you and I shall end our days at Augsburg, whence going, I shall leave it all I can — my blessing.

"*January* 12. — My master affecteth me much, and now maketh me sit with him in his horse-litter. A grave good man, of all respected, but sad for loss of a dear daughter, and loveth my psaltery; not giddy-paced ditties, but holy harmonies such as Cul de Jatte made wry mouths at. So many men, so many minds. But cooped in horse-litter and at night writing his letters, my journal halteth.

"*January* 14. — When not attending on my good mer-

chant, I consort with such of our company as are Italians, for 'tis to Italy I wend, and I am ill seen in Italian tongue. A courteous and a subtle people; at meat delicate feeders, and cleanly: love not to put their left hand in the dish. They say Venice is the garden of Lombardy, Lombardy the garden of Italy, Italy of the world.

"*January* 16. — Strong ways and steep, and the mountain-girls so girded up, as from their armpits to their waist is but a handful. Of all the garbs I yet have seen, the most unlovely.

"*January* 18. — In the midst of life we are in death. Oh! dear Margaret, I thought I had lost thee. Here I lie in pain and dole, and shall write thee that, which read you it in a romance ye should cry, 'Most improbable!' And so still wondering that I am alive to write it, and thanking for it God and the saints, this is what befell thy Gerard. Yestreen I wearied of being shut up in litter, and of the mule's slow pace, and so went forward; and being, I know not why, strangely full of spirit and hope, as I have heard befall some men when on trouble's brink, seemed to tread on air, and soon distanced them all. Presently I came to two roads, and took the larger; I should have taken the smaller. After travelling a good half-hour, I found my error, and returned; and deeming my company had long passed by, pushed bravely on, but I could not overtake them; and small wonder, as you shall hear. Then I was anxious, and ran, but bare was the road of those I sought; and night came down, and the wild beasts afoot, and I bemoaned my folly; also I was hungered. The moon rose clear and bright exceedingly, and presently, a little way off the road, I saw a tall wind-mill. 'Come,' said I, 'mayhap the miller will take ruth on me.' Near the mill was a haystack, and scattered about were store of little barrels; but, lo! they were not flour-barrels, but

tar-barrels, one or two, and the rest of spirits, Brant vein and Schiedam; I knew them momently, having seen the like in Holland. I knocked at the mill-door, but none answered. I lifted the latch, and the door opened inwards. I went in, and gladly, for the night was fine but cold, and a rime on the trees, which were a kind of lofty sycamores. There was a stove, but black; I lighted it with some of the hay and wood, for there was a great pile of wood outside, and, I know not how, I went to sleep. Not long had I slept, I trow, when hearing a noise I awoke, and there were a dozen men around me, with wild faces, and long black hair, and black sparkling eyes."

Catherine. Oh, my poor boy! those black-haired ones do still scare me to look on.

"I made my excuses in such Italian as I knew, and eking out by signs. They grinned. 'I had lost my company.' They grinned. 'I was an hungered.' Still they grinned, and spoke to one another in a tongue I knew not. At last one gave me a piece of bread and a tin mug of wine, as I thought, but it was spirits neat. I made a wry face, and asked for water; then these wild men laughed a horrible laugh. I thought to fly, but, looking towards the door, it was bolted with two enormous bolts of iron; and now first, as I ate my bread, I saw it was all guarded too, and ribbed with iron. My blood curdled within me, and yet I could not tell thee why; but hadst thou seen the faces, wild, stupid, and ruthless. I mumbled my bread, not to let them see I feared them; but oh, it cost me to swallow it and keep it in me. Then it whirled in my brain, was there no way to escape? Said I, 'They will not let me forth by the door; these be smugglers or robbers.' So I feigned drowsiness, and taking out two batzen said, 'Good men, for our Lady's grace let me lie on a bed and sleep, for I

am faint with travel.' They nodded and grinned their horrible grin, and bade one light a lanthorn and lead me. He took me up a winding staircase, up, up, and I saw no windows, but the wooden walls were pierced like a barbican tower, and methinks for the same purpose; and through these slits I got glimpses of the sky, and thought, 'Shall I e'er see thee again?' He took me to the very top of the mill, and there was a room with a heap of straw in one corner, and many empty barrels, and by the wall a truckle-bed. He pointed to it, and went down-stairs heavily, taking the light, for in this room was a great window, and the moon came in bright. I looked out to see, and lo, it was so high that even the mill sails at their highest came not up to my window by some feet, but turned very slow and stately underneath, for wind there was scarce a breath; and the trees seemed silver filagree made by angel craftsmen. My hope of flight was gone.

"But now, those wild faces being out of sight, I smiled at my fears: what an if they were ill men, would it profit them to hurt me? Natheless, for caution against surprise, I would put the bed against the door. I went to move it, but could not. It was free at the head, but at the foot fast clamped with iron to the floor. So I flung my psaltery on the bed, but for myself made a layer of straw at the door, so as none could open on me unawares. And I laid my sword ready to my hand, and said my prayers for thee and me, and turned to sleep.

"Below they drank and made merry. And hearing this gave me confidence. Said I, 'Out of sight, out of mind. Another hour, and the good Schiedam will make them forget that I am here.' And so I composed myself to sleep. And for some time could not for the boisterous mirth below. At last I dropped off. How long I slept I knew not; but I woke with a start: the noise

had ceased below, and the sudden silence woke me. And scarce was I awake, when sudden the truckle bed was gone with a loud clang all but the feet, and the floor yawned, and I heard my psaltery fall and break to atoms, deep, deep, below the very floor of the mill. It had fallen into a well. And so had I done, lying where it lay."

Margaret shuddered, and put her face in her hands; but speedily resumed.

"I lay stupefied at first. Then horror fell on me, and I rose, but stood rooted there, shaking from head to foot. At last I found myself looking down into that fearsome gap, and my very hair did bristle as I peered. And then, I remember, I turned quite calm, and made up my mind to die sword in hand. For I saw no man must know this their bloody secret and live. And I said, 'Poor Margaret!' And I took out of my bosom, where they lie ever, our marriage lines, and kissed them again and again. And I pinned them to my shirt again, that they might lie in one grave with me, if die I must. And I thought, 'All our love and hopes to end thus!'"

Eli. Whisht all! Their marriage lines? Give her time! But no word. I can bear no chat. My poor lad!

During the long pause that ensued, Catherine leaned forward and passed something adroitly from her own lap under her daughter's apron, who sat next her.

"Presently thinking, all in a whirl, of all that ever passed between us, and taking leave of all those pleasant hours, I called to mind how one day at Sevenbergen thou taughtest me to make a rope of straw. Mindest thou? The moment memory brought that happy day back to me, I cried out very loud, 'Margaret gives me a chance for life even here!' I woke from my lethargy. I seized on the straw and twisted it eagerly, as thou didst teach me, but my fingers trembled and delayed the task.

Whiles I wrought I heard a door open below. That was a terrible moment. Even as I twisted my rope I got to the window and looked down at the great arms of the mill coming slowly up, then passing, then turning less slowly down, as it seemed; and I thought, 'They go not as when there is wind: yet, slow or fast, what man rid ever on such steed as these, and lived? Yet,' said I, 'better trust to them and God, than to ill men.' And I prayed to Him whom even the wind obeyeth.

"Dear Margaret, I fastened my rope, and let myself gently down, and fixed my eye on that huge arm of the mill, which then was creeping up to me, and went to spring on to it. But my heart failed me at the pinch. And methought it was not near enow. And it passed calm and awful by. I watched for another; they were three. And after a little while one crept up slower than the rest methought. And I with my foot thrust myself in good time somewhat out from the wall, and crying aloud, 'Margaret!' did grip with all my soul the woodwork of the sail, and that moment was swimming in the air."

Giles. Well done! well done!

"Motion I felt little; but the stars seemed to go round the sky, and then the grass came up to me nearer and nearer, and when the hoary grass was quite close I was sent rolling along it as if hurled from a catapult, and got up breathless, and every point and tie about me broken. I rose, but fell down again in agony. I had but one leg I could stand on."

Catherine. Eh! dear! his leg is broke, my boy's leg is broke.

"And, e'en as I lay groaning, I heard a sound like thunder. It was the assassins running up the stairs. The crazy old mill shook under them. They must have found I had not fallen into their bloody trap, and were running to despatch me. Margaret, I felt no fear, for I

had now no hope. I could neither run, nor hide; so wild the place, so bright the moon. I struggled up all agony and revenge, more like some wounded wild beast than your Gerard. Leaning on my sword hilt I hobbled round; and swift as lightning, or vengeance, I heaped a great pile of their hay and wood at the mill door: then drove my dagger into a barrel of their smuggled spirits, and flung it on; then out with my tinder and lighted the pile. 'This will bring true men round my dead body,' said I. 'Aha!' I cried, 'think you I'll die alone, cowards, assassins, reckless fiends!' and at each word on went a barrel pierced. But, O Margaret! the fire fed by the spirits surprised me: it shot up and singed my very hair; it went roaring up the side of the mill swift as falls the lightning: and I yelled and laughed in my torture and despair, and pierced more barrels, and the very tar-barrels, and flung them on. The fire roared like a lion for its prey, and voices answered it inside from the top of the mill, and the feet came thundering down, and I stood as near that awful fire as I could, with uplifted sword to slay and be slain. The bolt was drawn. A tar-barrel caught fire. The door was opened. What followed? Not the men came out, but the fire rushed in at them like a living death, and the first I thought to fight with was blackened and crumpled on the floor like a leaf. One fearsome yell, and dumb forever. The feet ran up again, but fewer. I heard them hack with their swords a little way up, at the mill's wooden sides; but they had no time to hew their way out: the fire and reek were at their heels, and the smoke burst out at every loop-hole, and oozed blue in the moonlight through each crevice. I hobbled back, racked with pain and fury. There were white faces up at my window. They saw me. They cursed me. I cursed them back, and shook my naked sword: 'Come down the road I came,' I cried.

'But ye must come one by one, and, as ye come, ye die upon this steel.' Some cursed at that, but others wailed. For I had them all at deadly vantage. And, doubtless, with my smoke-grimed face and fiendish rage I looked a demon. And now there was a steady roar inside the mill. The flame was going up it as furnace up its chimney. The mill caught fire. Fire glimmered through it. Tongues of flame darted through each loop-hole and shot sparks and fiery flakes into the night. One of the assassins leaped on to the sail as I had done. In his hurry he missed his grasp and fell at my feet, and bounded from the hard ground like a ball, and never spoke nor moved again. And the rest screamed like women, and with their despair came back to me both ruth for them and hope of life for myself. And the fire gnawed through the mill in placen, and shot forth showers of great flat sparks like flakes of fiery snow; and the sails caught fire one after another; and I became a man again and staggered away terror-stricken, leaning on my sword, from the sight of my revenge, and with great bodily pain crawled back to the road. And, dear Margaret, the rimy trees were now all like pyramids of golden filagree, and lace, cobweb fine, in the red firelight. Oh! most beautiful. And a poor wretch got entangled in the burning sails, and whirled round screaming, and lost hold at the wrong time, and hurled like stone from mangonel high into the air; then a dull thump; it was his carcass striking the earth. The next moment there was a loud crash. The mill fell in on its destroyer, and a million great sparks flew up, and the sails fell over the burning wreck, and at that a million more sparks flew up, and the ground was strewn with burning wood and men. I prayed God forgive me, and kneeling with my back to that fiery shambles, I saw lights on the road; a welcome sight. It was a company coming towards me, and scarce two fur-

longs off. I hobbled towards them. Ere I had gone far I heard a swift step behind me. I turned. One had escaped; how escaped, who can divine? His sword shone in the moonlight. I feared him; methought the ghosts of all those dead sat on that glittering glaive. I put my other foot to the ground, maugre the anguish, and fled towards the torches, moaning with pain and shouting for aid. But what could I do? He gained on me. Behooved me turn and fight. Denys had taught me sword-play in sport. I wheeled, our swords clashed. His clothes they smelled all singed. I cut swiftly upward with supple hand, and his dangled bleeding at the wrist, and his sword fell; it tinkled on the ground. I raised my sword to hew him should he stoop for't. He stood and cursed me. He drew his dagger with his left; I opposed my point, and dared him with my eye to close. A great shout arose behind me from true men's throats. He started. He spat at me in his rage, then gnashed his teeth and fled blaspheming. I turned and saw torches close at hand. Lo, they fell to dancing up and down methought, and the next — moment — all — was — dark. I had — *ah!*"

Catherine. Here, help! water! Stand aloof, you that be men!

Margaret had fainted away.

CHAPTER V.

When she recovered, her head was on Catherine's arm, and the honest half of the family she had invaded like a foe stood round her uttering rough, homely words of encouragement, especially Giles, who roared at her that she was not to take on like that. "Gerard was alive and well, or he could not have writ this letter, the biggest mankind has seen as yet, and," as he thought, "the beautifullest and most moving, and smallest writ."

"Ay, good Master Giles," sighed Margaret, feebly, "he *was* alive; but how know I what hath since befallen him? Oh, why left he Holland to go among strangers fierce as lions? And why did I not drive him from me sooner than part him from his own flesh and blood? Forgive me, you that are his mother!"

And she gently removed Catherine's arm, and made a feeble attempt to slide off the chair on to her knees, which, after a brief struggle with superior force, ended in her finding herself on Catherine's bosom. Then Margaret held out the letter to Eli, and said faintly but sweetly, "I will trust it from my hand now. In sooth, I am little fit to read any more — and — and — loath to leave my comfort:" and she wreathed her other arm round Catherine's neck.

"Read thou, Richart," said Eli; "thine eyes be younger than mine."

Richart took the letter. "Well," said he, "such writing saw I never. A writeth with a needle's point; and clear to boot. Why is he not in my counting-house at Amsterdam instead of vagabonding it out yonder?"

"When I came to myself I was seated in the litter, and my good merchant holding of my hand. I babbled I know not what, and then shuddered awhile in silence. He put a horn of wine to my lips."

Catherine. Bless him! bless him!

Eli. Whisht!

"And I told him what had befallen. He would see my leg. It was sprained sore, and swelled at the ankle; and all my points were broken, as I could scarce keep up my hose, and I said, 'Sir, I shall be but a burden to you, I doubt, and can make you no harmony now; my poor psaltery it is broken;' and I did grieve over my broken music, companion of so many weary leagues. But he patted me on the cheek, and bade me not fret; also he did put up my leg on a pillow, and tended me like a kind father.

"*January* 14. I sit all day in the litter, for we are pushing forward with haste, and at night the good, kind merchant sendeth me to bed, and will not let me work. Strange! whene'er I fall in with men like fiends, then the next moment God still sendeth me some good man or woman, lest I should turn away from human kind. O Margaret! how strangely mixed they be, and how old I am by what I was three months agone! And lo! if good Master Fugger hath not been and bought me a psaltery."

Catherine. Eli, my man, an yon merchant comes our way, let us buy a hundred ells of cloth of him, and not higgle.

Eli. That will I, take your oath on't!

While Richart prepared to read, Kate looked at her mother, and with a faint blush drew out a piece of work from under her apron, and sewed with head depressed a little more than necessary. On this her mother drew a piece of work out of her pocket, and sewed too, while

Richart read. Both the specimens these sweet surreptitious creatures now first exposed to observation were babies' caps, and more than half finished, which told a tale. Horror! they were like little monks' cowls in shape and delicacy.

"*January* 12. Laid up in the litter, and as good as blind, but, halting to bait, Lombardy plains burst on me. Oh, Margaret! a land flowing with milk and honey; all sloping plains, goodly rivers, jocund meadows, delectable orchards, and blooming gardens; and, though winter, looks warmer than poor beloved Holland at midsummer, and makes the wanderer's face to shine, and his heart to leap for joy, to see earth so kind and smiling. Here be vines, cedars, olives, and cattle plenty, but three goats to a sheep. The draught oxen wear white linen on their necks, and standing by dark green olive-trees each one is a picture; and the folk, especially women, wear delicate strawen hats with flowers and leaves fairly imitated in silk, with silver mixed. This day we crossed a river prettily in a chained ferry-boat. On either bank was a windlass, and a single man by turning of it drew our whole company to his shore, whereat I did admire, being a stranger. Passed over with us some country folk. And, an old woman looking at a young wench, she did hide her face with her hand, and held her crucifix out like knight his sword in tournay, dreading the evil eye.

"*January* 15. Safe at Venice. A place whose strange and passing beauty is well known to thee by report of our mariners. Dost mind too how Peter would oft fill our ears withal, we handed beneath the table, and he still discoursing of this sea-enthroned and peerless citie, in shape a bow, and its great canal and palaces on piles, and its watery ways plied by scores of gilded boats; and that market-place of nations, *orbis, non urbis, forum,* St. Mark his place? And his statue with the peerless

jewels in his eyes, and the lion at his gate? But I, lying at my window in pain, may see none of these beauties as yet, but only a street, fairly paved, which is dull, and houses with oiled paper and linen, in lieu of glass, which is rude; and the passers-by, their habits and their gestures, wherein they are superfluous. Therefore, not to miss my daily comfort of whispering to thee, I will e'en turn mine eyes inward, and bind my sheaves of wisdom reaped by travel. For I love thee so, that no treasure pleases me not shared with thee; and what treasure so good and enduring as knowledge? This then have I, Sir Footsore, learned, that each nation hath its proper wisdom, and its proper folly; and, methinks, could a great king, or duke, tramp like me, and see with his own eyes, he might pick the flowers and eschew the weeds of nations, and go home and set his own folk on Wisdom's hill. The Germans in the north were churlish, but frank and honest; in the south, kindly and honest too. Their general blot is drunkenness, the which they carry even to mislike and contempt of sober men. They say commonly, '*Kanstu niecht sauffen und fressen so kanstu kienem hern wol dienen.*' In England the vulgar sort drink as deep, but the worshipful hold excess in this a reproach, and drink a health or two for courtesy, not gluttony, and still sugar the wine. In their cups the Germans use little mirth, or discourse, but ply the business sadly, crying, '*Seyte frolich!*' The best of their drunken sport is '*Kurlemurlehuff*,' a way of drinking with touching deftly of the glass the beard, the table, in due turn, intermixed with whistlings and snappings of the finger so curiously ordered as 'tis a labor of Hercules, but to the beholder right pleasant and mirthful. Their topers, by advice of German leeches, sleep with pebbles in their mouths. For, as of a boiling pot the lid must be set ajar, so with these fleshly wine-pots, to

vent the heat of their inward parts, spite of which many die suddenly from drink; but 'tis a matter of religion to slur it, and gloze it, and charge some innocent disease therewith. Yet 'tis more a custom than very nature, for their women come among the tipplers, and do but stand a moment, and, as it were, kiss the wine-cup, and are indeed most temperate in eating and drinking, and, of all women, modest and virtuous, and true spouses and friends to their mates: far before our Holland lassies, that, being maids, put the question to the men, and being wived, do lord it over them. Why, there is a wife in Tergou, not far from our door. One came to the house and sought her man. Says she, 'You'll not find him: he asked my leave to go abroad this afternoon, and I did give it him.'"

Catherine. 'Tis sooth! 'tis sooth! 'Twas Beck Hulse, Jonah's wife. This comes of a woman wedding a boy.

"In the south where wine is, the gentry drink themselves bare, but not in the north, for with beer a noble shall sooner burst his body than melt his lands. They are quarrelsome, but 'tis the liquor, not the mind, for they are none revengeful. And when they have made a bad bargain drunk, they stand to it sober. They keep their windows bright, and judge a man by his clothes. Whatever fruit or grain or herb grows by the roadside, gather and eat. The owner seeing you shall say, 'Art welcome, honest man.' But an ye pluck a wayside grape, your very life is in jeopardy. 'Tis eating of that Heaven gave to be drunken. The French are much fairer spoken, and not nigh so true-hearted. Sweet words cost them nought. They call it '*payer en blanche.*'"

Denys. Les coquins! ha! ha!

"Natheless, courtesy is in their hearts, ay, in their very blood. They say commonly, 'Give yourself the trouble of sitting down;' and such straws of speech show

how blows the wind. Also at a public show, if you would leave your seat, yet not lose it, tie but your napkin round the bench, and no French man or woman will sit here, but rather keep the place for you."

Catherine. Gramercy! that *is* manners. France for me!

Denys rose and placed his hand gracefully to his breastplate.

"Natheless, they say things in sport which are not courteous, but shocking. '*Le diable t'emporte!*' '*Allez au diable!*' and so forth. But I trow they mean not such dreadful wishes: custom belike. Moderate in drinking, and mix water with their wine, and sing and dance over their cups, and are then enchanting company. They are curious not to drink in another man's cup. In war the English gain the better of them in the field; but the French are their masters in attack and defence of cities. Witness Orleans, where they besieged their besiegers, and hashed them sore with their double and treble culverines, and many other sieges in this our century. More than all nations they flatter their women, and despise them. No She may be their sovereign ruler. Also they often hang their female malefactors, instead of drowning them decently as other nations use. The furniture in their inns is walnut, in Germany only deal. French windows are ill. The lower half is of wood, and opens: the upper half is of glass, but fixed, so that the servant cannot come at it to clean it. The German windows are all glass, and movable, and shine far and near like diamonds. In France many mean houses are not glazed at all. Once I saw a Frenchman pass a church without unbonneting. This I ne'er witnessed in Holland, Germany, or Italy. At many inns they show the traveller his sheets to give him assurance they are clean, and warm them at the fire before him, — a laudable cus-

tom. They receive him kindly and like a guest: they mostly cheat him, and whiles cut his throat. They plead in excuse hard and tyrannous laws. And true it is their law thrusteth its nose into every platter, and its finger into every pie. In France worshipful men wear their hats and their furs in-doors, and go abroad lighter clad. In Germany they don hat and furred cloak to go abroad, but sit bareheaded and light clad round the stove.

"The French intermix not the men and women folk in assemblies, as we Hollanders use. Round their preachers the women sit on their heels in rows, and the men stand behind them. Their harvests are rye, and flax, and wine. Three mules shall you see to one horse, and whole flocks of sheep as black as coal.

"In Germany the snails be red. I lie not. The French buy minstrelsy, but breed jests, and make their own mirth. The Germans foster their set fools with ear-caps, which move them to laughter by simulating madness, — a calamity that asks pity, not laughter. In this particular I deem that lighter nation wiser than the graver German. What sayest thou? Alas! canst not answer me now.

"In Germany the petty laws are wondrous wise and just: those against criminals, bloody; in France bloodier still, and executed a trifle more cruelly there. Here the wheel is common, and the fiery stake; and under this king they drown men by the score in Paris river, Seine yclept. But the English are as peremptory in hanging and drowning for a light fault; so travellers report. Finally, a true-hearted Frenchman, when ye chance on one, is a man as near perfect as earth affords; and such a man is my Denys, spite of his foul mouth."

Denys. My foul mouth! Is that so writ, Master Richart?

Richart. Ay, in sooth; see else.

Denys. (Inspecting the letter gravely.) I read not the letter so.

Richart. How then?

Denys. Humph! ahem! why, just the contrary. — He added, "'Tis kittle work perusing of these black scratches men are agreed to take for words. And I trow 'tis still by guess you clerks do go, worthy sir. My foul mouth! This is the first time e'er I heard on't. Eh, mesdames?"

But the females did not seize the opportunity he gave them, and burst into a loud and general disclaimer. Margaret blushed and said nothing: the other two bent silently over their work with something very like a sly smile. Denys inspected their countenances long and carefully; and the perusal was so satisfactory that he turned with a tone of injured, but patient, innocence, and bade Richart read on.

"The Italians are a polished and subtle people. They judge a man, not by his habits, but his speech and gesture. Here Sir Chough may by no means pass for falcon gentle, as did I in Germany, pranked in my noble servant's feathers. Wisest of all nations in their singular temperance of food and drink. Most foolish of all to search strangers coming into their borders, and stay them from bringing much money in. They should rather invite it, and, like other nations, let the traveller from taking of it out. Also here in Venice the dames turn their black hair yellow by the sun and art, to be wiser than Him who made them. Ye enter no Italian town without a bill of health, though now is no plague in Europe. This peevishness is for extortion's sake. The innkeepers cringe and fawn, and cheat, and, in country places, murder you. Yet will they give you clean sheets by paying therefor. Delicate in eating, and abhor from putting their hand in the plate: sooner they

will apply a crust or what not. They do even tell of a cardinal at Rome which armeth his guest's left hand with a little bifurcal dagger to hold the meat, while his knife cutteth it. But methinks this, too, is to be wiser than Him who made the hand so supple and prehensile."

Eli. I am of your mind, my lad.

"They are sore troubled with the itch; and ointment for it, *unguento per la rogna,* is cried at every corner of Venice. From this my window I saw an urchin sell it to three several dames in silken trains, and to two velvet knights."

Catherine. Italy, my lass, I rede ye wash your body i' the tub o' Sundays; and then ye can put your hand i' the plate o' Thursday withouten offence.

"Their bread is lovely white. Their meats they spoil with sprinkling cheese over them. O perversity! Their salt is black: without a lie. In commerce these Venetians are masters of the earth and sea, and govern their territories wisely. Only one flaw I find; the same I once heard a learned friar cast up against Plato his republic; to wit, that here women are encouraged to venal frailty, and do pay a tax to the state, which, not content with silk and spice, and other rich and honest freights good store, must trade in sin. Twenty thousand of these Jezebels there be in Venice and Candia, and about, pampered and honored for bringing strangers to the city, and many live in princely palaces of their own. But herein methinks the politic signors of Venice forget what King David saith, 'Except the Lord keep the citie, the watchman waketh but in vain.' Also, in religion, they hang their cloth according to the wind, siding now with the Pope, now with the Turk, but ay with the god of traders, Mammon hight. Shall flower so cankered bloom to the world's end? But since I speak of flowers, this none may deny them, that they are most cunning in

making roses and gilliflowers to blow unseasonably. In summer they nip certain of the budding roses and water them not. Then in winter they dig round these discouraged plants, and put in cloves, and so with great art rear sweet-scented roses, and bring them to market in January. And did first learn this art of a cow. Buds she grazed in summer, and they sprouted at Yule. Women have sat in the doctors' chairs at their colleges. But she that sat in St. Peter's was a German. Italy too, for artful fountains and figures that move by water and enact life. And next for fountains is Augsburg, where they harness the foul knave Smoke to good Sir Spit, and he turneth stout Master Roast. But lest any one place should vaunt, two towns there be in Europe, which, scorning giddy fountains, bring water tame in pipes to every burgher's door, and he filleth his vessels with but turning of a cock. One is London, so watered this many a year by pipes of a league from Paddington, a neighboring city; and the other is the fair town of Lubeck. Also the fierce English are reported to me wise in that they will not share their land and flocks with wolves, but have fairly driven those marauders into their mountains. But neither in France, nor Germany, nor Italy, is a wayfarer's life safe from the vagabones after sundown. I can hear of no glazed house in all Venice, but only oiled linen and paper, and, behind these barbarian eyelets, a wooden jalosy. Their name for a cowardly assassin is 'a brave man,' and for an harlot, 'a courteous person,' which is as much as to say that a woman's worst vice, and a man's worst vice, are virtues. But I pray God for little Holland that there an assassin may be yclept an assassin, and an harlot an harlot till doomsday, and then gloze foul faults with silken names who can!"

Eli. (With a sigh.) He should have been a priest, saving your presence, my poor lass.

"Go to, peevish writer; art tied smarting by the leg, and may not see the beauties of Venice. So thy pen kicketh all around like a wicked mule.

"*January* 16. Sweetheart, I must be brief and tell thee but a part of that I have seen, for this day my journal ends. To-night it sails for thee, and I, unhappy, not with it, but to-morrow, in another ship, to Rome.

"Dear Margaret, I took a hand litter, and was carried to St. Mark his church. Outside it, towards the market-place, is a noble gallery, and above it four famous horses, cut in brass by ancient Romans, and seem all moving, and at the very next step must needs leap down on the beholder. About the church are six hundred pillars of marble, porphyry, and ophites. Inside is a treasure greater than either at St. Denys, or Loretto, or Toledo. Here a jewelled pitcher given the seigniory by a Persian king, also the ducal cap blazing with jewels, and on its crown a diamond and a chrysolite, each as big as an almond: two golden crowns and twelve golden stomachers studded with jewels, from Constantinople; item, a monstrous sapphire; item, a great diamond given by a French king; item, a prodigious carbuncle; item, three unicorns' horns. But what are these compared with the sacred relics?

"Dear Margaret, I stood and saw the brazen chest that holds the body of St. Mark the Evangelist. I saw with these eyes, and handled, his ring and his Gospel written with his own hand, and all my travels seemed light: for who am I that I should see such things? Dear Margaret, his sacred body was first brought from Alexandria by merchants in 810, and then not prized as now; for between 829, when this church was builded, and 1094, the very place where it lay was forgotten. Then holy priests fasted and prayed many days seeking for light, and lo, the Evangelist's body brake at midnight through the

marble and stood before them. They fell to the earth: but in the morning found the crevice the sacred body had burst through, and peering through it saw him lie. Then they took and laid him in his chest beneath the altar, and carefully put back the stone with its miraculous crevice, which crevice I saw, and shall gape for a monument while the world lasts. After that they showed me the Virgin's chair, it is of stone; also her picture, painted by St. Luke, very dark, and the features now scarce visible. This picture, in time of drought, they carry in procession, and brings the rain. I wish I had not seen it. Item, two pieces of marble spotted with John the Baptist's blood; item, a piece of the true cross and of the pillar to which Christ was tied; item, the rock struck by Moses, and wet to this hour; also a stone Christ sat on, preaching at Tyre; but some say it is the one the Patriarch Jacob laid his head on, and I hold with them, by reason our Lord never preached at Tyre. Going hence they showed me the state nursery for the children of those aphrodisian dames, their favorites. Here in the outer wall was a broad niche, and if they bring them so little as they can squeeze them through it alive, the bairn falls into a net inside, and the state takes charge of it, but if too big, their mothers must even take them home again, with whom abiding 'tis like to be *mali corvi mali ovum.* Coming out of the church we met them carrying in a corpse, with the feet and face bare. This I then first learned is Venetian custom, and sure no other town will ever rob them of it, nor of this that follows. On a great porphyry slab in the piazza were three ghastly heads rotting and tainting the air, and in their hot summers like to take vengeance with breeding of a plague. These were traitors to the state, and a heavy price — two thousand ducats — being put on each head, their friends had slain them and brought all three to the slab, and so

CHURCH OF ST. MARK.

sold blood of others and their own faith. No state buys heads so many nor pays half so high a price for that sorry merchandise. But what I most admired was to see over against the duke's palace a fair gallows in alabaster, reared express to hang him, and no other, for the least treason to the state; and there it stands in his eye whispering him *memento mori*. I pondered, and owned these signors my masters, who will let no man, not even their sovereign, be above the common weal. Hard by, on a wall, the workmen were just finishing, by order of the seigniory, the stone effigy of a tragical and enormous act enacted last year, yet on the wall looks innocent. Here two gentlefolks whisper together, and there other twain, their swords by their side. Four brethren were they, which did on either side conspire to poison the other two, and so halve their land in lieu of quartering it; and at a mutual banquet these twain drugged the wine, and those twain envenomed a marchpane, to such good purpose, that the same afternoon lay four 'brave men' around one table grovelling in mortal agony, and cursing of one another and themselves, and so concluded miserably, and the land, for which they had lost their immortal souls, went into another family. And why not? it could not go into a worse.

"But O sovereign wisdom of by-words! how true they put the finger on each nation's, or particular's, fault.

> 'Quand Italie sera sans poison
> Et France sans trahison
> Et l'Angleterre sans guerre,
> Lors sera le monde sans terre.'"

Richart explained this to Catherine, then proceeded: "And after this they took me to the quay, and presently I espied among the masts one garlanded with amaranth flowers. 'Take me thither,' said I, and I let my guide

know the custom of our Dutch skippers to hoist flowers to the mast-head when they are courting a maid. Oft had I scoffed at this, saying, 'So then his wooing is the earth's concern.' But now, so far from the Rotter, that bunch at a mast-head made my heart leap with assurance of a countryman. They carried me, and oh, Margaret! on the stern of that Dutch hoy, was writ in muckle letters:

RICHART ELIASSOEN, AMSTERDAM.

'Put me down,' I said: 'for our Lady's sake put me down.' I sat on the bank and looked, scarce believing my eyes, and looked, and presently fell to crying, till I could see the words no more. Ah me, how they went to my heart, those bare letters in a foreign land. Dear Richart! good kind brother Richart! often have I sat on his knee and rid on his back. Kisses many has he given me, unkind word from him had I never. And there was his name on his own ship, and his face and all his grave but good and gentle ways came back to me, and I sobbed vehemently, and cried aloud, 'Why, why is not brother Richart here, and not his name only?' I spake in Dutch, for my heart was too full to hold their foreign tongues, and" —

Eli. Well, Richart, go on, lad, prithee go on. Is this a place to halt at?

Richart. Father, with my duty to you, it is easy to say Go on, but think ye I am not flesh and blood? The poor boy's — simple grief and brotherly love coming — so sudden — on me, they go through my heart and — I cannot go on: sink me if I can even see the words, 'tis writ so fine.

Denys. Courage, good Master Richart! Take your time. Here are more eyne wet than yours. Ah, little comrade! would God thou wert here, and I at Venice for thee.

Richart. Poor little curly-headed lad, what had he done that we have driven him so far?

"That is what I fain would know," said Catherine, dryly, then fell to weeping and rocking herself, with her apron over her head.

"Kind dame, good friends," said Margaret, trembling, "let me tell you how the letter ends. The skipper hearing our Gerard speak his grief in Dutch, accosted him, and spake comfortably to him; and after a while our Gerard found breath to say he was worthy Master Richart's brother. Thereat was the good skipper all agog to serve him."

Richart. So! so! skipper! Master Richart aforesaid will be at thy wedding and bring's purse to boot.

Margaret. Sir, he told Gerard of his consort that was to sail that very night for Rotterdam; and dear Gerard had to go home and finish his letter and bring it to the ship. And the rest, it is but his poor dear words of love to me, the which, an't please you, I think shame to hear them read aloud, and ends with the lines I sent to Mistress Kate, and *they* would sound so harsh *now* and ungrateful.

The pleading tone, as much as the words, prevailed, and Richart said he would read no more aloud, but run his eye over it for his own brotherly satisfaction. She blushed and looked uneasy, but made no reply.

"Eli," said Catherine, still sobbing a little, "tell me, for our Lady's sake, how our poor boy is to live at that nasty Rome. He is gone there to write, but here be his own words to prove writing avails nought; a had died o' hunger by the way but for paint-brush and psaltery. Well-a-day!"

"Well," said Eli, "he has got brush and music still. Besides, so many men so many minds. Writing, thof it had no sale in other parts, may be merchandise at Rome."

"Father," said little Kate, "have I your good leave to put in my word 'twixt mother and you?"

"And welcome, little heart."

"Then, seems to me, painting and music, close at hand, be stronger than writing, but being distant, nought to compare; for see what glamour written paper hath done here but now. Our Gerard, writing at Venice, hath verily put his hand into this room at Rotterdam, and turned all our hearts. Ay, dear dear Gerard, methinks thy spirit hath rid hither on these thy paper wings; and oh! dear father, why not do as we should do were he here in the body?"

"Kate," said Eli, "fear not; Richart and I will give him glamour for glamour. We will write him a letter, and send it to Rome by a sure hand with money, and bid him home on the instant."

Cornelis and Sybrant exchanged a gloomy look.

"Ah, good father! And meantime?"

"Well, meantime?"

"Dear father, dear mother, what can we do to pleasure the absent, but be kind to his poor lass; and her own trouble afore her?"

"'Tis well!" said Eli; "but I am older than thou." Then he turned gravely to Margaret: "Wilt answer me a question, my pretty mistress?"

"If I may, sir," faltered Margaret.

"What are these marriage lines Gerard speaks of in the letter?"

"Our marriage lines, sir. His and mine. Know you not that we are betrothed?"

"Before witnesses?"

"Ay, sure. My poor father and Martin Wittenhaagen."

"This is the first I ever heard of it. How came they in his hands? They should be in yours."

"Alas, sir, the more is my grief; but I ne'er doubted

him: and he said it was a comfort to him to have them in his bosom."

"Y' are a very foolish lass."

"Indeed I was, sir. But trouble teaches the simple."

"'Tis a good answer. Well, foolish or no, y'are honest. I had shown ye more respect at first, but I thought y'had been his leman, and that is the truth."

"God forbid, sir! Denys, methinks 'tis time for us to go. Give me my letter, sir!"

"Bide ye! bide ye! be not so hot for a word! Natheless, wife, methinks her red cheek becomes her."

"Better than it did you to give it her, my man."

"Softly, wife, softly. I am not counted an unjust man thof I be somewhat slow."

Here Richart broke in. "Why, mistress, did ye shed your blood for our Gerard?"

"Not I, sir. But maybe I would."

"Nay, nay. But he says you did. Speak sooth, now!"

"Alas! I know not what ye mean. I rede ye believe not all that my poor lad says of me. Love makes him blind."

"Traitress!" cried Denys. "Let her not throw dust in thine eyes, Master Richart. Old Martin tells me — ye need not make signals to me, she-comrade; I am as blind as love. Martin tells me she cut her arm, and let her blood flow, and smeared her heels when Gerard was hunted by the bloodhounds, to turn the scent from her lad."

"Well, and if I did, 'twas my own, and spilled for the good of my own," said Margaret, defiantly. But, Catherine suddenly clasping her, she began to cry at having found a bosom to cry on, of one who would have also shed her blood for Gerard in danger.

Eli rose from his chair. "Wife," said he, solemnly, "you will set another chair at our table for every meal: also another plate and knife. They will be for Margaret

and Peter. She will come when she likes, and stay away when she pleases. None may take her place at my left hand. Such as can welcome her are welcome to me. Such as cannot, I force them not to bide with me. The world is wide and free. Within my walls I am master, and my son's betrothed is welcome."

Catherine bustled out to prepare supper. Eli and Richart sat down and concocted a letter to bring Gerard home. Richart promised it should go by sea to Rome that very week. Sybrandt and Cornelis exchanged a gloomy wink, and stole out. Margaret, seeing Giles deep in meditation, for the dwarf's intelligence had taken giant's strides, asked him to bring her the letter. "You have heard but half, good Master Giles," said she. "Shall I read you the rest?"

"I shall be much beholden to you," shouted the courtier.

She gave him her stool: curiosity bowed his pride to sit on it: and Margaret murmured the first part of the letter into his ear very low, not to disturb Eli and Richart. And, to do this, she leaned forward and put her lovely face cheek by jowl with Giles's hideous one: a strange contrast, and worth a painter's while to try and represent. And in this attitude Catherine found her, and all the mother warmed towards her, and she exchanged an eloquent glance with little Kate.

The latter smiled, and sewed, with drooping lashes.

"Get him home on the instant," roared Giles. "I'll make a man of him. I can do aught with the duke."

"Hear the boy!" said Catherine, half comically, half proudly.

"We hear him," said Richart; "a mostly makes himself heard when a do speak."

Sybrandt. Which will get to him first?
Cornelis (gloomily). Who can tell?

A STRANGE CONTRAST, AND WORTH A PAINTER'S WHILE.

CHAPTER VI.

About two months before this scene in Eli's home, the natives of a little maritime place between Naples and Rome might be seen flocking to the sea beach, with eyes cast seaward at a ship, that labored against a stiff gale blowing dead on the shore.

At times she seemed likely to weather the danger, and then the spectators congratulated her aloud: at others the wind and sea drove her visibly nearer, and the lookers-on were not without a secret satisfaction they would not have owned even to themselves.

> Non quia vexari quemquam est jucunda voluptas
> Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.

And the poor ship, though not scientifically built for sailing, was admirably constructed for going ashore, with her extravagant poop that caught the wind, and her lines like a cocked hat reversed. To those on the beach that battered laboring frame of wood seemed alive, and struggling against death with a panting heart. But could they have been transferred to her deck they would have seen she had not one beating heart but many, and not one nature but a score were coming out clear in that fearful hour.

The mariners stumbled wildly about the deck, handling the ropes as each thought fit, and cursing and praying alternately.

The passengers were huddled together round the mast, some sitting, some kneeling, some lying prostrate, and grasping the bulwarks as the vessel rolled and pitched in

the mighty waves. One comely young man, whose ashy cheek, but compressed lips, showed how hard terror was battling in him with self-respect, stood a little apart, holding tight by a shroud, and wincing at each sea. It was the ill-fated Gerard. Meantime prayers and vows rose from the trembling throng amidships, and, to hear them, it seemed there were almost as many gods about as men and women. The sailors, indeed, relied on a single goddess. They varied her titles only, calling on her as "Queen of Heaven," "Star of the Sea," "Mistress of the World," "Haven of Safety." But among the landsmen polytheism raged. Even those who by some strange chance hit on the same divinity did not hit on the same edition of that divinity. An English merchant vowed a heap of gold to our Lady of Walsingham. But a Genoese merchant vowed a silver collar of four pounds to our Lady of Loretto; and a Tuscan noble promised ten pounds of wax lights to our Lady of Ravenna; and with a similar rage for diversity they pledged themselves, not on the true Cross, but on the true Cross in this, that, or the other, modern city.

Suddenly a more powerful gust than usual catching the sail at a disadvantage, the rotten shrouds gave way, and the sail was torn out with a loud crack and went down the wind smaller and smaller, blacker and blacker, and fluttered into the sea, half a mile off, like a sheet of paper, and, ere the helmsman could put the ship's head before the wind, a wave caught her on the quarter and drenched the poor wretches to the bone, and gave them a foretaste of chill death. Then one vowed aloud to turn Carthusian monk, if St. Thomas would save him. Another would go a pilgrim to Compostella, bareheaded, barefooted, with nothing but a coat of mail on his naked skin, if St. James would save him. Others invoked Thomas, Dominic, Denys, and, above all, Catherine of Sienna.

Two petty Neapolitan traders stood shivering.

One shouted at the top of his voice, "I vow to St. Christopher at Paris a waxen image of his own weight, if I win safe to land."

On this the other nudged him, and said, "Brother, brother, take heed what you vow. Why, if you sell all you have in the world by public auction, 'twill not buy his weight in wax."

"Hold your tongue, you fool," said the vociferator. Then in a whisper:

"Think ye I am in earnest? Let me but win safe to land, I'll not give him a rush dip."

Others lay flat and prayed to the sea. "O most merciful sea! O sea most generous! O bountiful sea! O beautiful sea! be gentle, be kind, preserve us in this hour of peril."

And others wailed and moaned in mere animal terror each time the ill-fated ship rolled or pitched more terribly than usual; and she was now a mere plaything in the arms of the tremendous waves.

A Roman woman of the humbler class sat with her child at her half-bared breast, silent amid that wailing throng: her cheek ashy pale; her eyes calm; and her lips moved at times in silent prayer, but she neither wept, nor lamented, nor bargained with the gods. Whenever the ship seemed really gone under their feet, and bearded men squeaked, she kissed her child; but that was all. And so she sat patient, and suckled him in death's jaws; for why should he lose any joy she could give him; moribundo? Ay, there, do I believe, sat antiquity among those mediævals. Sixteen hundred years had not tainted the old Roman blood in her veins; and the instinct of a race she had perhaps scarce heard of taught her to die with decent dignity.

A gigantic friar stood on the poop with feet apart,

like the Colossus of Rhodes, not so much defying, as ignoring, the peril that surrounded him. He recited verses from the Canticles with a loud unwavering voice; and invited the passengers to confess to him. Some did so on their knees, and he heard them, and laid his hands on them, and absolved them as if he had been in a snug sacristy, instead of a perishing ship. Gerard got nearer and nearer to him, by the instinct that takes the wavering to the side of the impregnable. And, in truth, the courage of heroes facing fleshly odds might have paled by the side of that gigantic friar, and his still more gigantic composure. Thus, even here, two were found who maintained the dignity of our race: a woman, tender, yet heroic, and a monk steeled by religion against mortal fears.

And now, the sail being gone, the sailors cut down the useless mast a foot above the board, and it fell with its remaining hamper over the ship's side. This seemed to relieve her a little.

But now the hull, no longer impelled by canvas, could not keep ahead of the sea. It struck her again and again on the poop, and the tremendous blows seemed given by a rocky mountain, not by a liquid.

The captain left the helm and came amidships pale as death. "Lighten her," he cried. "Fling all overboard, or we shall founder ere we strike, and lose the one little chance we have of life." While the sailors were executing this order, the captain, pale himself, and surrounded by pale faces that demanded to know their fate, was talking as unlike an English skipper in like peril as can well be imagined. "Friends," said he, "last night when all was fair, too fair, alas! there came a globe of fire close to the ship. When a pair of them come it is good luck, and nought can drown her that voyage. We mariners call these fiery globes Castor and Pollux. But if

Castor come without Pollux, or Pollux without Castor, she is doomed. Therefore, like good Christians, prepare to die."

These words were received with a loud wail.

To a trembling inquiry how long they had to prepare, the captain replied, "She may, or may not, last half an hour; over that, impossible; she leaks like a sieve; bustle, men, lighten her."

The poor passengers seized on everything that was on deck and flung it overboard. Presently they laid hold of a heavy sack; an old man was lying on it, sea-sick. They lugged it from under him. It rattled. Two of them drew it to the side; up started the owner, and, with an unearthly shriek, pounced on it. "Holy Moses! what would you do? 'Tis my all; 'tis the whole fruits of my journey; silver candlesticks, silver plates, brooches, hanaps" —

"Let go, thou hoary villain," cried the others; "shall all our lives be lost for thy ill-gotten gear?" "Fling him in with it," cried one; "'tis this Ebrew we Christian men are drowned for." Numbers soon wrenched it from him, and heaved it over the side. It splashed into the waves. Then its owner uttered one cry of anguish, and stood glaring, his white hair streaming in the wind, and was going to leap after it, and would, had it floated. But it sank, and was gone forever; and he staggered to and fro, tearing his hair, and cursed them and the ship, and the sea, and all the powers of heaven and hell alike.

And now the captain cried out: "See, there is a church in sight. Steer for that church, mate, and you, friends, pray to the saint, whoe'er he be."

So they steered for the church and prayed to the unknown god it was named after. A tremendous sea pooped them, broke the rudder, and jammed it immovable, and flooded the deck.

Then wild with superstitious terror some of them came round Gerard. "Here is the cause of all," they cried. "He has never invoked a single saint. He is a heathen; here is a pagan aboard."

"Alas, good friends, say not so," said Gerard, his teeth chattering with cold and fear. "Rather call these heathens, that lie a-praying to the sea. Friends, I do honor the saints, — but I dare not pray to them now, — there is no time — (oh!) what avail me Dominic, and Thomas, and Catherine? Nearer God's throne than these St. Peter sitteth; and, if I pray to him, it's odd, but I shall be drowned ere he has time to plead my cause with God. Oh! oh! oh! I must need go straight to Him that made the sea, and the saints, and me. Our Father, which art in heaven, save these poor souls and me that cry for the bare life! Oh, sweet Jesus, pitiful Jesus, that didst walk Genezaret when Peter sank, and wept for Lazarus dead when the apostles' eyes were dry, oh, save poor Gerard — for dear Margaret's sake!"

At this moment the sailors were seen preparing to desert the sinking ship in the little boat, which even at that epoch every ship carried; then there was a rush of egotists; and thirty souls crowded into it. Remained behind three who were bewildered, and two who were paralyzed, with terror. The paralyzed sat like heaps of wet rags, the bewildered ones ran to and fro, and saw the thirty egotists put off, but made no attempt to join them: only kept running to and fro, and wringing their hands. Besides these there was one on his knees praying over the wooden statue of the Virgin Mary, as large as life, which the sailors had reverently detached from the mast. It washed about the deck, as the water came slushing in from the sea, and pouring out at the scuppers; and this poor soul kept following it on his knees, with his hands clasped at it, and the water playing with it. And there

was the Jew palsied, but not by fear. He was no longer capable of so petty a passion. He sat cross-legged, bemoaning his bag, and, whenever the spray lashed him, shook his fist at where it came from, and cursed the Nazarenes, and their gods, and their devils, and their ships, and their waters, to all eternity.

And the gigantic Dominican, having shriven the whole ship, stood calmly communing with his own spirit. And the Roman woman sat pale and patient, only drawing her child closer to her bosom as death came nearer.

Gerard saw this, and it awakened his manhood. "See! see!" he said, "they have ta'en the boat and left the poor woman and her child to perish."

His heart soon set his wit working.

"Wife, I'll save thee yet, please God." And he ran to find a cask or a plank to float her. There was none.

Then his eye fell on the wooden image of the Virgin. He caught it up in his arms, and, heedless of a wail that issued from its worshipper like a child robbed of its toy, ran aft with it. "Come, wife," he cried. "I'll lash thee and the child to this. 'Tis sore worm-eaten, but 'twill serve."

She turned her great dark eye on him and said a single word:

"Thyself?"

But with wonderful magnanimity and tenderness.

"I am a man, and have no child to take care of."

"Ah!" said she, and his words seemed to animate her face with a desire to live. He lashed the image to her side. Then with the hope of life she lost something of her heroic calm; not much: her body trembled a little, but not her eye.

The ship was now so low in the water that by using an oar as a lever he could slide her into the waves.

"Come," said he, "while yet there is time."

She turned her great Roman eyes, wet now, upon him. "Poor youth! — God forgive me! — My child!" And he launched her on the surge, and with his oar kept her from being battered against the ship.

A heavy hand fell on him; a deep sonorous voice sounded in his ear: "'Tis well. Now come with me."

It was the gigantic friar.

Gerard turned, and the friar took two strides, and laid hold of the broken mast. Gerard did the same, obeying him instinctively. Between them, after a prodigious effort, they hoisted up the remainder of the mast, and carried it off. "Fling it in," said the friar, "and follow it." They flung it in; but one of the bewildered passengers had run after them, and jumped first and got on one end. Gerard seized the other, the friar the middle.

It was a terrible situation. The mast rose and plunged with each wave like a kicking horse, and the spray flogged their faces mercilessly, and blinded them: to help knock them off.

Presently was heard a long grating noise ahead. The ship had struck, and soon after, she being stationary now, they were hurled against her with tremendous force. Their companion's head struck against the upper part of the broken rudder with a horrible crack, and was smashed like a cocoa-nut by a sledge-hammer. He sunk directly, leaving no trace but a red stain on the water, and a white clot on the jagged rudder, and a death cry ringing in their ears, as they drifted clear under the lee of the black hull. The friar uttered a short Latin prayer for the safety of his soul, and took his place composedly. They rolled along ὑπερ θαναtοιο; one moment they saw nothing, and seemed down in a mere basin of watery hills: the next they caught glimpses of the shore speckled bright with people, who kept throwing up their arms with wild Italian gestures to encourage them, and

the black boat driving bottom upwards, and between it and them the woman rising and falling like themselves. She had come across a paddle, and was holding her child tight with her left arm, and paddling gallantly with her right.

When they had tumbled along thus for a long time, suddenly the friar said quietly: "I touched the ground."

"Impossible, father," said Gerard, "we are more than a hundred yards from shore. Prithee, prithee, leave not our faithful mast."

"My son," said the friar, "you speak prudently. But know that I have business of holy Church on hand, and may not waste time floating when I can walk, in her service. There, I felt it with my toes again; see the benefit of wearing sandals, and not shoon. Again; and sandy. Thy stature is less than mine; keep to the mast! I walk." He left the mast accordingly, and extending his powerful arms, rushed through the water. Gerard soon followed him. At each overpowering wave the monk stood like a tower, and closing his mouth, threw his head back to encounter it, and was entirely lost under it awhile; then emerged, and ploughed lustily on. At last they came close to the shore; but the suction outward baffled all their attempts to land. Then the natives sent stout fishermen into the sea, holding by long spears in a triple chain; and so dragged them ashore.

The friar shook himself, bestowed a short paternal benediction on the natives, and went on to Rome, with eyes bent on earth, according to his rule, and without pausing. He did not even cast a glance back upon that sea, which had so nearly engulfed him, but had no power to harm him without his Master's leave.

While he stalks on alone to Rome without looking back, I, who am not in the service of holy Church, stop

a moment to say that the reader and I were within six inches of this giant once before; but we escaped him that time. Now, I fear, we are in for him. Gerard grasped every hand upon the beach. They brought him to an enormous fire, and with a delicacy he would hardly have encountered in the north, left him to dry himself alone; on this he took out of his bosom a parchment, and a paper, and dried them carefully. When this was done to his mind, and not till then, he consented to put on a fisherman's dress and leave his own by the fire, and went down to the beach. What he saw may be briefly related.

The captain stuck by the ship, not so much from gallantry, as from a conviction that it was idle to resist Castor or Pollux, whichever it was that had come for him in a ball of fire.

Nevertheless the sea broke up the ship and swept the poop, captain and all, clear of the rest, and took him safe ashore. Gerard had a principal hand in pulling him out of the water. The disconsolate Hebrew landed on another fragment, and on touching earth, offered a reward for his bag, which excited little sympathy, but some amusement. Two more were saved on pieces of the wreck. The thirty egotists came ashore, but one at a time, and dead; one breathed still. Him, the natives, with excellent intentions, took to a hot fire. So then he too retired from this shifting scene.

As Gerard stood by the sea, watching, with horror and curiosity mixed, his late companions washed ashore, a hand was laid lightly on his shoulder. He turned. It was the Roman matron, burning with womanly gratitude. She took his hand gently, and raising it slowly to her lips, kissed it; but so nobly, she seemed to be conferring an honor on one deserving hand. Then, with face all beaming and moist eyes, she held her child up, and made him kiss his preserver.

Gerard kissed the child; more than once. He was fond of children. But he said nothing. He was much moved; for she did not speak at all, except with her eyes, and glowing cheeks, and noble antique gesture, so large and stately. Perhaps she was right. Gratitude is not a thing of words. It was an ancient Roman matron thanking a modern from her heart of hearts.

Next day, towards afternoon, Gerard — twice as old as last year, thrice as learned in human ways, a boy no more, but a man who had shed blood in self-defence, and grazed the grave by land and sea — reached the eternal city; *post tot naufragia tutus.*

CHAPTER VII.

Gerard took a modest lodging on the west bank of the Tiber, and every day went forth in search of work, taking a specimen round to every shop he could hear of that executed such commissions.

They received him coldly. "We make our letter somewhat thinner than this," said one. "How dark your ink is," said another. But the main cry was, "What avails this? Scant is the Latin writ here now. Can ye not write Greek?"

"Ay, but not nigh so well as Latin."

"Then you shall never make your bread at Rome."

Gerard borrowed a beautiful Greek manuscript at a high price, and went home with a sad hole in his purse, but none in his courage.

In a fortnight he had made vast progress with the Greek character; so then, to lose no time, he used to work at it till noon, and hunt customers the rest of the day.

When he carried round a better Greek specimen than any they possessed, the traders informed him that Greek and Latin were alike unsalable; the city was thronged with works from all Europe. He should have come last year.

Gerard bought a psaltery.

His landlady, pleased with his looks and manners, used often to speak a kind word in passing. One day she made him dine with her, and somewhat to his surprise asked him what had dashed his spirits. He told her. She gave him her reading of the matter. "Those

sly traders, she would be bound, had writers in their pay for whose work they received a noble price and paid a sorry one. So no wonder they blow cold on you. Methinks you write too well. How know I that? say you. Marry — marry, because you lock not your door, like the churl Pietro, and women will be curious. Ay, ay, you write too well for *them.*"

Gerard asked an explanation.

"Why," said she, "your good work might put out the eyes of that they are selling."

Gerard sighed. "Alas! dame, you read folk on the ill side, and you so kind and frank yourself."

"My dear little heart, these Romans are a subtle race. Me? I am a Siennese, thanks to the Virgin."

"My mistake was leaving Augsburg," said Gerard.

"Augsburg?" said she, haughtily; "is that a place to even to Rome? I never heard of it, for my part."

She then assured him that he should make his fortune in spite of the booksellers. "Seeing thee a stranger, they lie to thee without sense or discretion. Why, all the world knows that our great folk are bitten with the writing spider this many years, and pour out their money like water, and turn good land and houses into writ sheepskins to keep in a chest or a cupboard. God help them, and send them safe through this fury, as He hath through a heap of others; and in sooth hath been somewhat less cutting and stabbing among rival factions, and vindictive eating of their opposites' livers, minced and fried, since scribbling came in. Why, *I* can tell you two. There is his Eminence Cardinal Bassarion, and his Holiness the Pope himself. There be a pair could keep a score such as thee a-writing night and day. But I'll speak to Teresa; she hears the gossip of the court."

The next day she told him she had seen Teresa, and

had heard of five more signors who were bitten with the writing spider. Gerard took down their names, and bought parchment, and busied himself for some days in preparing specimens. He left one, with his name and address, at each of these signors' doors, and hopefully awaited the result.

There was none.

Day after day passed and left him heartsick.

And strange to say this was just the time when Margaret was fighting so hard against odds to feed her male dependents at Rotterdam, and arrested for curing without a license instead of killing with one.

Gerard saw ruin staring him in the face.

He spent the afternoons picking up canzonets and mastering them. He laid in playing cards to color, and struck off a meal per day.

This last stroke of genius got him into fresh trouble.

In these "*camere locande*" the landlady dressed all the meals, though the lodgers bought the provisions. So Gerard's hostess speedily detected him, and asked him if he was not ashamed himself; by which brusque opening, having made him blush and look scared, she pacified herself all in a moment, and appealed to his good sense whether adversity was a thing to be overcome on an empty stomach.

"*Patienza*, my lad! times will mend, meantime I will feed you for the love of heaven" (Italian for "gratis").

"Nay, hostess," said Gerard, "my purse is not yet quite void, and it would add to my trouble an if true folk should lose their due by me."

"Why, you are as mad as your neighbor Pietro, with his one bad picture."

"Why, how know you 'tis a bad picture?"

"Because nobody will buy it. There is one that hath

no gift. He will have to don casque and glaive, and carry his panel for a shield."

Gerard pricked up his ears at this: so she told him more. Pietro had come from Florence with money in his purse, and an unfinished picture; had taken her one unfurnished room, opposite Gerard's, and furnished it neatly. When his picture was finished, he received visitors and had offers for it; these, though in her opinion liberal ones, he had refused so disdainfully as to make enemies of his customers. Since then he had often taken it out with him to try and sell, but had always brought it back; and, the last month, she had seen one movable after another go out of his room, and now he wore but one suit, and lay at night on a great chest. She had found this out only by peeping through the keyhole, for he locked the door most vigilantly whenever he went out. "Is he afraid we shall steal his chest, or his picture, that no soul in all Rome is weak enough to buy?"

"Nay, sweet hostess, see you not 'tis his poverty he would screen from view?"

"And the more fool he! Are all our hearts as ill as his? A might give us a trial first any way."

"How you speak of him! Why, his case is mine; and your countryman to boot."

"Oh, we Siennese love strangers. His case yours? nay, 'tis just the contrary. You are the comeliest youth ever lodged in this house; hair like gold: he is a dark, sour-visaged loon. Besides, you know how to take a woman on her better side; but not he. Natheless I wish he would not starve to death in my house, to get me a bad name. Any way, one starveling is enough in any house. You are far from home, and it is for me, which am the mistress here, to number your meals — for me and the Dutch wife, your mother, that is far away: we

two women shall settle that matter. Mind thou thine own business, being a man, and leave cooking and the like to us, that are in the world for little else that I see but to roast fowls, and suckle men at starting, and sweep their grown-up cobwebs."

"Dear kind dame, in sooth you do often put me in mind of my mother that is far away."

"All the better; I'll put you more in mind of her before I have done with you." And the honest soul beamed with pleasure.

Gerard not being an egotist, nor blinded by female partialities, saw his own grief in poor proud Pietro; and the more he thought of it, the more he resolved to share his humble means with that unlucky artist; Pietro's sympathy would repay him. He tried to waylay him: but without success.

One day he heard a groaning in the room. He knocked at the door, but received no answer. He knocked again. A surly voice bade him enter.

He obeyed somewhat timidly, and entered a garret furnished with a chair, a picture, face to wall, an iron basin, an easel, and a long chest, on which was coiled a haggard young man with a wonderfully bright eye. Anything more like a coiled cobra ripe for striking the first comer was never seen.

"Good Signor Pietro," said Gerard, "forgive me that, weary of my own solitude, I intrude on yours; but I am your nighest neighbor in this house, and methinks your brother in fortune. I am an artist, too."

"You are a painter? Welcome, signor. Sit down on my bed."

And Pietro jumped off and waved him into the vacant throne with a magnificent demonstration of courtesy.

Gerard bowed and smiled, but hesitated a little. "I may not call myself a painter. I am a writer, a calli-

graph. I copy Greek and Latin manuscripts, when I can get them to copy."

"And you call that an artist!"

"Without offence to your superior merit, Signor Pietro."

"No offence, stranger, none. Only, meseemeth, an artist is one who thinks, and paints his thought. Now a calligraph but draws in black and white the thoughts of another."

"'Tis well distinguished, signor. But then, a writer can write the thoughts of the great ancients, and matters of pure reason, such as no man may paint: ay, and the thoughts of God, which angels could not paint. But let that pass. I am a painter as well; but a sorry one."

"The better thy luck. They will buy thy work in Rome."

"But seeking to commend myself to one of thy eminence, I thought it well rather to call myself a capable writer than a scurvy painter."

At this moment a step was heard on the stair. "Ah! 'tis the good dame," cried Gerard. "What ho! hostess, I am here in conversation with Signor Pietro. I dare say he will let me have my humble dinner here."

The Italian bowed gravely.

The landlady brought in Gerard's dinner smoking and savory. She put the dish down on the bed with a face divested of all expression, and went.

Gerard fell to. But ere he had eaten many mouthfuls, he stopped, and said: "I am an ill-mannered churl, Signor Pietro. I ne'er eat to my mind, when I eat alone. For our Lady's sake put a spoon into this ragout with me; 'tis not unsavory, I promise you."

Pietro fixed his glittering eye on him.

"What, good youth, thou a stranger, and offerest me thy dinner?"

"Why, see, there is more than one can eat."

"Well, I accept," said Pietro: and took the dish with some appearance of calmness, and flung the contents out of window.

Then he turned trembling with mortification and ire, and said: "Let that teach thee to offer alms to an artist thou knowest not, master writer."

Gerard's face flushed with anger, and it cost him a bitter struggle not to box this high-souled creature's ears. And then to go and destroy good food! His mother's milk curdled in his veins with horror at such impiety. Finally, pity at Pietro's petulance and egotism, and a touch of respect for poverty-struck pride prevailed.

However, he said coldly, "Likely what thou hast done might pass in a novel of thy countryman, Signor Boccaccio; but 'twas not honest."

"Make that good!" said the painter sullenly.

"I offered thee half my dinner; no more. But thou hast ta'en it all. Hadst a right to throw away thy share, but not mine. Pride is well, but justice is better."

Pietro stared, then reflected.

"'Tis well. I took thee for a fool, so transparent was thine artifice. Forgive me! And prithee leave me. Thou seest how 'tis with me. The world hath soured me. I hate mankind. I was not always so. Once more excuse that my discourtesy, and fare thee well."

Gerard sighed, and made for the door.

But suddenly a thought struck him. "Signor Pietro," said he, "we Dutchmen are hard bargainers. We are the lads '*een eij scheeren*,' that is 'to shave an egg.' Therefore, I, for my lost dinner, do claim to feast mine eyes on your picture, whose face is towards the wall."

"Nay, nay," said the painter hastily, "ask me not that; I have already misconducted myself enough towards thee. I would not shed thy blood."

"Saints forbid! My blood?"

"Stranger," said Pietro sullenly, "irritated by repeated insults to my picture, which is my child, my heart, I did in a moment of rage make a solemn vow to drive my dagger into the next one that should flout it, and the labor and love that I have given to it."

"What, are all to be slain that will not praise this picture?" and he looked at its back with curiosity.

"Nay, nay: if you would but look at it, and hold your parrot tongues. But you will be talking. So I have turned it to the wall forever. Would I were dead, and buried in it for my coffin!"

Gerard reflected.

"I accept the conditions. Show me the picture! I can but hold my peace."

Pietro went and turned its face, and put it in the best light the room afforded, and coiled himself again on his chest, with his eye and stiletto glittering.

The picture represented the Virgin and Christ, flying through the air, in a sort of cloud of shadowy cherubic faces; underneath was a landscape, forty or fifty miles in extent, and a purple sky above.

Gerard stood and looked at it in silence. Then he stepped close, and looked. Then he retired as far off as he could, and looked; but said not a word.

When he had been at this game half an hour, Pietro cried out querulously and somewhat inconsistently: "Well, have you not a word to say about it?"

Gerard started. "I cry your mercy; I forgot there were three of us here. Ay, I have much to say." And he drew his sword.

"Alas! alas!" cried Pietro, jumping in terror from his lair. "What wouldst thou?"

"Marry, defend myself against thy bodkin, signor; and at due odds, being, as aforesaid, a Dutchman. There-

fore, hold aloof, while I deliver judgment, or I will pin thee to the wall like a cockchafer."

"Oh! is that all?" said Pietro, greatly relieved. "I feared you were going to stab my poor picture with your sword, stabbed already by so many foul tongues."

Gerard "pursued criticism under difficulties." Put himself in a position of defence, with his sword's point covering Pietro, and one eye glancing aside at the picture. "First, signor, I would have you know that, in the mixing of certain colors, and in the preparation of your oil, you Italians are far behind us Flemings. But let that flea stick. For, as small as I am, I can show you certain secrets of the Van Eycks, that you will put to marvellous profit in your next picture. Meantime I see in this one the great qualities of your nation. Verily, ye are *solis filii*. If we have color you have imagination. Mother of heaven! an he hath not flung his immortal soul upon the panel. One thing I go by is this; it makes other pictures I once admired seem drossy, earth-born things. The drapery here is somewhat short and stiff. Why not let it float freely, the figures being in air and motion?"

"I will! I will!" cried Pietro eagerly. "I will do anything for those who will but see what I *have* done."

"Humph! This landscape it enlightens me. Henceforth I scorn those little huddled landscapes that did erst content me. Here is nature's very face: a spacious plain, each distance marked, and every tree, house, figure, field and river smaller and less plain, by exquisite gradation, till vision itself melts into distance. O beautiful! And the cunning rogue hath hung his celestial figure in air out of the way of his little world below. Here, floating saints beneath heaven's purple canopy. There, far down, earth and her busy hives. And they let you take this painted poetry, this blooming hymn, through the

streets of Rome and bring it home unsold. But I tell thee in Ghent or Bruges, or even in Rotterdam, they would tear it out of thy hands. But 'tis a common saying that a stranger's eye sees clearest. Courage, Pietro Vanucci! I reverence thee, and though myself a scurvy painter, do forgive thee for being a great one. Forgive thee? I thank God for thee and such rare men as thou art; and bow the knee to thee in just homage. Thy picture is immortal, and thou, that hast but a chest to sit on, art a king in thy most royal art. *Viva, il maëstro! Viva!*"

At this unexpected burst the painter, with all the *abandon* of his nation, flung himself on Gerard's neck. "They said it was a maniac's dream," he sobbed.

"Maniacs themselves! no, idiots!" shouted Gerard.

"Generous stranger! I will hate men no more, since the world hath such as thee. I was a viper to fling thy poor dinner away; a wretch, a monster."

"Well, monster, wilt be gentle now, and sup with me?"

"Ah! that I will. Whither goest thou?"

"To order supper on the instant. We will have the picture for third man."

"I will invite it whiles thou art gone. My poor picture, child of my heart."

"Ah! master; 'twill look on many a supper after the worms have eaten you and me."

"I hope so," said Pietro.

CHAPTER VIII.

About a week after this the two friends sat working together, but not in the same spirit. Pietro dashed fitfully at his, and did wonders in a few minutes, and then did nothing, except abuse it; then presently resumed it in a fury, to lay it down with a groan. Through all which kept calmly working, calmly smiling, the canny Dutchman.

To be plain, Gerard, who never had a friend he did not master, had put his onagra in harness. The friends were painting playing cards to boil the pot.

When done, the indignant master took up his picture to make his daily tour in search of a customer.

Gerard begged him to take the cards as well, and try and sell them. He looked all the rattlesnake, but eventually embraced Gerard in the Italian fashion, and took them, after first drying the last-finished ones in the sun, which was now powerful in that happy clime.

Gerard, left alone, executed a Greek letter or two, and then mended a little rent in his hose. His landlady found him thus employed, and inquired ironically whether there were no women in the house.

"When you have done that," said she, "come and talk to Teresa, my friend I spoke to thee of, that hath a husband not good for much, which brags his acquaintance with the great."

Gerard went down, and who should Teresa be but the Roman matron!

"Ah, madama," said he, "is it you? The good dame told me not that. And the little fair-haired boy, is he

well? is he none the worse for his voyage in that strange boat?"

"He is well," said the matron.

"Why, what are you two talking about?" said the landlady, staring at them both in turn; "and why tremble you so, Teresa *mia?*"

"He saved my child's life," said Teresa, making an effort to compose herself.

"What! my lodger? and he never told me a word of that. Art not ashamed to look me in the face?"

"Alas! speak not harshly to him," said the matron. She then turned to her friend and poured out a glowing description of Gerard's conduct, during which Gerard stood blushing like a girl, and scarce recognizing his own performance, gratitude painted it so fair.

"And to think thou shouldst ask me to serve thy lodger, of whom I knew nought but that he had thy good word, O Fiammina: and that was enough for me. Dear youth, in serving thee I serve myself."

Then ensued an eager description, by the two women, of what had been done, and what should be done, to penetrate the thick wall of fees, commissions, and chicanery, which stood between the patrons of art and an unknown artist in the Eternal City.

Teresa smiled sadly at Gerard's simplicity in leaving specimens of his skill at the doors of the great.

"What!" said she, "without promising the servants a share — without even feeing them, to let the signors see thy merchandise! As well have flung it into Tiber."

"Well-a-day!" sighed Gerard. "Then how is an artist to find a patron? for artists are poor, not rich."

"By going to some city nobler and not so greedy as this," said Teresa. "*La corte Romana non vuol' pecora senza lana.*"

She fell into thought, and said she would come again to-morrow.

The landlady felicitated Gerard. "Teresa has got something in her head," said she.

Teresa was scarce gone when Pietro returned with his picture, looking black as thunder. Gerard exchanged a glance with the landlady, and followed him up-stairs to console him.

"What, have they let thee bring home thy masterpiece?"

"As heretofore."

"More fools they, then."

"That is not the worst."

"Why, what is the matter?"

"They have bought the cards," yelled Pietro, and hammered the air furiously right and left.

"All the better," said Gerard cheerfully.

"They flew at me for them. They were enraptured with them. They tried to conceal their longing for them, but could not. I saw, I feigned, I pillaged; curse the boobies!"

And he flung down a dozen small silver coins on the floor, and jumped on them, and danced on them with basilisk eyes, and then kicked them assiduously, and sent them spinning and flying, and running all abroad. Down went Gerard on his knees, and followed the maltreated innocents directly, and transferred them tenderly to his purse.

"Shouldst rather smile at their ignorance, and put it to profit," said he.

"And so I will," said Pietro, with concentrated indignation. "The brutes! We will paint a pack a day; we will set the whole city gambling and ruining itself, while we live like princes on its vices and stupidity. There was one of the queens, though, I had fain kept back. 'Twas you limned her, brother. She had lovely red-brown hair and sapphire eyes, and above all, soul."

"Pietro," said Gerard softly, "I painted that one from my heart."

The quick-witted Italian nodded, and his eyes twinkled.

"You love her so well, yet leave her."

"Pietro, it is because I love her so dear, that I have wandered all this weary road."

This interesting colloquy was interrupted by the landlady crying from below, "Come down, you are wanted." He went down, and there was Teresa again.

"Come with me, Ser Gerard."

CHAPTER IX.

Gerard walked silently beside Teresa, wondering in his own mind, after the manner of artists, what she was going to with him, instead of asking her. So at last she told him of her own accord. A friend had informed her of a working goldsmith's wife who had wanted a writer. "Her shop is hard by; you will not have far to go."

Accordingly they soon arrived at the goldsmith's wife.

"Madama," said Teresa, "Leonora tells me you want a writer: I have brought you a beautiful one; he saved my child at sea. Prithee look on him with favor."

The goldsmith's wife complied in one sense. She fixed her eyes on Gerard's comely face, and could hardly take them off again. But her reply was unsatisfactory. "Nay, I have no use for a writer. Ah! I mind now, it is my gossip; Clælia, the sausage-maker, wants one: she told me, and I told Leonora."

Teresa made a courteous speech and withdrew.

Clælia lived at some distance, and when they reached her house she was out. Teresa said calmly, "I will await her return," and sat so still, and dignified, and statuesque, that Gerard was beginning furtively to draw her, when Clælia returned.

"Madama, I hear from the goldsmith's wife, the excellent Olympia, that you need a writer (here she took Gerard by the hand and led him forward); I have brought you a beautiful one; he saved my child from the cruel waves. For our Lady's sake, look with favor on him."

"My good dame, my fair ser," said Clælia, "I have no use for a writer; but now you remind me, it was my friend Appia Claudia asked me for one but the other day. She is a tailor, lives in the Via Lepida."

Teresa retired calmly.

"Madama," said Gerard, "this is likely to be a tedious business for you."

Teresa opened her eyes.

"What was ever done without a little patience?" She added mildly, "We will knock at every door at Rome but you shall have justice."

"But, madama, I think we are dogged. I noticed a man that follows us, sometimes afar, sometimes close."

"I have seen it," said Teresa coldly: but her cheek colored faintly. "It is my poor Lodovico."

She stopped and turned, and beckoned with her finger.

A figure approached them somewhat unwillingly.

When he came up, she gazed him full in the face, and he looked sheepish.

"Lodovico *mio*," said she, "know this young ser, of whom I have so often spoken to thee. Know him and love him, for he it was who saved thy wife and child."

At these last words Lodovico, who had been bowing and grinning artificially, suddenly changed to an expression of heartfelt gratitude, and embraced Gerard warmly.

Yet somehow there was something in the man's original manner, and his having followed his wife by stealth, that made Gerard uncomfortable under this caress. However, he said, "We shall have your company, Ser Lodovico?"

"No, signor," replied Lodovico, "I go not on that side Tiber."

"*Addio*, then," said Teresa significantly.

"When shall you return home, Teresa *mia?*"

"When I have done mine errand, Lodovico."

They pursued their way in silence. Teresa now wore a sad and almost gloomy air.

To be brief, Appia Claudia was merciful, and did not send them over Tiber again, but only a hundred yards down the street to Lucretia, who kept the glove shop; she it was who wanted a writer; but what for, Appia Claudia could not conceive. Lucretia was a merry little dame, who received them heartily enough, and told them she wanted no writer, kept all her accounts in her head. "It was for my confessor, Father Colonna; he is mad after them."

"I have heard of his excellency," said Teresa.

"Who has not?"

"But, good dame, he is a friar; he has made vow of poverty. I cannot let the young man write and not be paid. He saved my child at sea."

"Did he now?" And Lucretia cast an approving look on Gerard. "Well, make your mind easy; a Colonna never wants for money. The good father has only to say the word, and the princes of his race will pour a thousand crowns into his lap. And such a confessor, dame! the best in Rome. His head is leagues and leagues away all the while; he never heeds what you are saying. Why, I think no more of confessing my sins to him than of telling them to that wall. Once, to try him, I confessed, along with the rest, as how I had killed my lodger's little girl and baked her in a pie. Well, when my voice left off confessing, he started out of his dream, and says he, a-mustering up a gloom, 'My erring sister, say three paternosters and three Ave Marias kneeling, and eat no butter nor eggs next Wednesday, and *pax vobiscum!*' and off a went with his hands behind him, looking as if there was no such thing as me in the world."

Teresa waited patiently, then calmly brought this dis-

cursive lady back to the point: "Would she be so kind as to go with this good youth to the friar and speak for him?"

"Alack! how can I leave my shop? And what need? His door is aye open to writers, and painters, and scholars, and all such cattle. Why, one day he would not receive the Duke d'Urbino, because a learned Greek was closeted with him, and the friar's head and his so close together over a dusty parchment just come in from Greece, as you could put one cowl over the pair. His wench Onesta told me. She mostly looks in here for a chat when she goes an errand."

"This is the man for thee, my friend," said Teresa.

"All you have to do," continued Lucretia, "is to go to his lodgings (my boy shall show them you), and tell Onesta you come from me, and you are a writer, and she will take you up to him. If you put a piece of silver in the wench's hand, 'twill do you no harm; that stands to reason."

"I have silver," said Teresa warmly.

"But stay," said Lucretia, "mind one thing. What the young man saith he can do, that he must be able to do, or let him shun the good friar like poison. He is a very wild beast against all bunglers. Why, 'twas but t'other day one brought him an ill-carved crucifix. Says he, 'Is this how you present Salvator Mundi? who died for you in mortal agony; and you go and grudge him careful work. This slovenly gimcrack a crucifix? But that it *is* a crucifix of some sort, and I am a holy man, I'd dust your jacket with your crucifix,' says he. Onesta heard every word through the keyhole; so mind."

"Have no fears, madama," said Teresa, loftily. "I will answer for his ability; he saved my child."

Gerard was not subtle enough to appreciate this con-

clusion: and was so far from sharing Teresa's confidence that he begged a respite. He would rather not go to the friar to-day: would not to-morrow do as well?

"Here is a coward for ye," said Lucretia.

"No, he is not a coward," said Teresa, firing up. "He is modest."

"I am afraid of this high-born, fastidious friar," said Gerard. "Consider, he has seen the handiwork of all the writers in Italy, dear Dame Teresa; if you would but let me prepare a better piece of work than yet I have done, and then to-morrow I will face him with it."

"I consent," said Teresa.

They walked home together.

Not far from his own lodging was a shop that sold vellum. There was a beautiful white skin in the window. Gerard looked at it wistfully; but he knew he could not pay for it; so he went on rather hastily. However, he soon made up his mind where to get vellum; and, parting with Teresa at his own door, ran hastily up stairs, and took the bond he had brought all the way from Sevenbergen, and laid it with a sigh on the table. He then prepared with his chemicals to erase the old writing; but, as this was his last chance of reading it, he now overcame his deadly repugnance to bad writing, and proceeded to decipher the deed in spite of its detestable contractions. It appeared by this deed that Ghysbrecht Van Swieten was to advance some money to Floris Brandt on a piece of land, and was to repay himself out of the rent.

On this Gerard felt it would be imprudent and improper to destroy the deed. On the contrary he vowed to decipher every word at his leisure. He went downstairs, determined to buy a small piece of vellum with his half of the card-money.

At the bottom of the stairs he found the landlady and

Teresa talking. At sight of him the former cried: "Here he is. You are caught, *donna mia.* See what she has bought you!" And whipped out from under her apron the very skin of vellum Gerard had longed for.

"Why, dame! why, Donna Teresa!" And he was speechless with pleasure and astonishment.

"Dear Donna Teresa, there is not a skin in all Rome like it. However came you to hit on this one? 'Tis glamour."

"Alas, dear boy, did not thine eye rest on it with desire? and didst thou not sigh in turning away from it? And was it for Teresa to let thee want the thing after that?"

"What sagacity! what goodness, madama! Oh, dame, I never thought I should possess this. What did you pay for it?"

"I forget. *Addio,* Fiammina. *Addio,* Ser Gerard. Be happy, be prosperous, as you are good." And the Roman matron glided away while Gerard was hesitating, and thinking how to offer to pay so stately a creature for her purchase.

The next day in the afternoon he went to Lucretia, and her boy took him to Fra Colonna's lodgings. He announced his business, and feed Onesta, and she took him up to the friar. Gerard entered with a beating heart. The room, a large one, was strewed and heaped with objects of art, antiquity, and learning, lying about in rich profusion and confusion. Manuscripts, pictures, carvings in wood and ivory, musical instruments; and in this glorious chaos sat the friar, poring intently over an Arabian manuscript.

He looked up a little peevishly at the interruption. Onesta whispered in his ear.

"Very well," said he. "Let him be seated. Stay;

young man, show me how you write." And he threw Gerard a piece of paper, and pointed to an inkhorn.

"So please you, reverend father," said Gerard, "my hand it trembleth too much at this moment; but last night I wrote a vellum page of Greek, and the Latin version by its side, to show the various character."

"Show it me."

Gerard brought the work to him in fear and trembling; then stood, heart-sick, awaiting his verdict.

When it came it staggered him. For the verdict was, a Dominican falling on his neck.

CHAPTER X.

Happy the man who has two chain-cables; merit and women.

Oh, that I, like Gerard, had a *chaîne des dames* to pull up by!

I would be prose laureate, or professor of the spasmodic, or something, in no time. *En attendant*, I will sketch the Fra Colonna.

The true revivers of ancient learning and philosophy were two writers of fiction — Petrarch and Boccaccio.

Their labors were not crowned with great, public, and immediate success; but they sowed the good seed; and it never perished, but quickened in the soil, awaiting sunshine.

From their day Italy was never without a native scholar or two, versed in Greek; and each learned Greek who landed there was received fraternally. The fourteenth century, ere its close, saw the birth of Poggio, Valla, and the elder Guarino: and early in the fifteenth Florence under Cosmo de Medici was a nest of Platonists. These, headed by Gemistus Pletho, a born Greek, began about A.D. 1440, to write down Aristotle. For few minds are big enough to be just to great A without being unjust to capital B.

Theodore Gaza defended that great man with moderation; George of Trebizond with acerbity, and retorted on Plato. Then Cardinal Bessarion, another born Greek, resisted the said George and his idol, in a tract *Adversus calumniatorem Platonis.*

Pugnacity, whether wise or not, is a form of vitality.

Born without controversial bile in so zealous an epoch, Francesco Colonna, a young nobleman of Florence, lived for the arts. At twenty he turned Dominican friar. His object was quiet study. He retired from idle company, and faction fights, the humming and the stinging of the human hive, to St. Dominic and the Nine Muses.

An eager student of languages, pictures, statues, chronology, coins, and monumental inscriptions. These last loosened his faith in popular histories.

He travelled many years in the East, and returned laden with spoils: master of several choice MSS., and versed in Greek and Latin, Hebrew and Syriac. He found his country had not stood still. Other lettered princes besides Cosmo had sprung up. Alfonso, King of Naples, Nicolas d'Este, Lionel d'Este, etc. Above all, his old friend Thomas of Sarzana had been made pope, and had lent a mighty impulse to letters; had accumulated five thousand MSS. in the library of the Vatican, and had set Poggio to translate Diodorus Siculus and Xenophon's Cyropædia, Laurentius Valla to translate Herodotus and Thucydides, Theodore Gaza, Theophrastus; George of Trebizond, Eusebius, and certain treatises of Plato, etc., etc.

The monk found Plato and Aristotle under armistice, but Poggio and Valla at loggerheads over verbs and nouns, and on fire with *odium philologicum*. All this was heaven; and he settled down in his native land, his life a rosy dream. None so happy as the versatile, provided they have not their bread to make by it. And Fra Colonna was versatility. He knew seven or eight languages, and a little mathematics; could write a bit, paint a bit, model a bit, sing a bit, strum a bit; and could relish superior excellence in all these branches. For this last trait he deserved to be as happy as he was. For, gauge the intellects of your acquaintances, and you

will find but few whose minds are neither deaf nor blind nor dead to some great art or science,

> And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.

And such of them as are conceited as well as stupid, shall even parade, instead of blushing for, the holes in their intellects.

A zealot in art, the friar was a sceptic in religion.

In every age there are a few men who hold the opinions of another age; past or future. Being a lump of simplicity, his scepticism was as *naïf* as his enthusiasm. He affected to look on the religious ceremonies of his day as his models; the heathen philosophers regarded the worship of gods and departed heroes, mummeries good for the populace. But here his mind drew unconsciously a droll distinction. Whatever Christian ceremony his learning taught him was of purely pagan origin, that he respected out of respect for antiquity; though had he, with his turn of mind, been a pagan and its contemporary, he would have scorned it from his philosophic heights.

Fra Colonna was charmed with his new artist, and, having the run of half the palaces in Rome, sounded his praises so that he was soon called upon to resign him. He told Gerard what great princes wanted him. "But I am so happy with you, father," objected Gerard. "Fiddlestick about being happy with me," said Fra Colonna, "you must not be happy; you must be a man of the world; the grand lesson I impress on the young is, be a man of the world. Now these Montesini can pay you three times as much as I can, and they shall too — by Jupiter."

And the friar clapped a terrific price on Gerard's pen. It was acceded to without a murmur. Much higher

prices were going for *copying* than *authorship* ever obtained for centuries under the printing-press.

Gerard had three hundred crowns for Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric.

The great are mighty sweet upon all their pets, while the fancy lasts; and in the rage for Greek MSS. the handsome writer soon became a pet, and nobles of both sexes caressed him like a lapdog.

It would have turned a vain fellow's head; but the canny Dutchman saw the steel hand beneath the velvet glove, and did not presume. Nevertheless it was a proud day for him when he found himself seated with Fra Colonna at the table of his present employer, Cardinal Bessarion. They were about a mile from the top of that table; but, never mind, there they were; and Gerard had the advantage of seeing roast pheasants dished up with all their feathers as if they had just flown out of a coppice instead of off the spit: also chickens cooked in bottles, and tender as peaches. But the grand novelty was the napkins, surpassingly fine, and folded into cocked hats, and birds' wings, and fans, etc., instead of lying flat. This electrified Gerard: though my readers have seen the dazzling phenomenon without tumbling backwards chair and all.

After dinner the tables were split in pieces, and carried away, and lo! under each was another table spread with sweetmeats. The signoras and signorinas fell upon them and gormandized; but the signors eyed them with reasonable suspicion.

"But, dear father," objected Gerard, "I see not the bifurcal daggers with which men say his excellency armeth the left hand of a man."

"Nay, 'tis the Cardinal Orsini which hath invented yon peevish instrument for his guests to fumble their meats withal. One, being in haste, did skewer his

tongue to his palate with it, I hear; *O tempora, O mores!* The ancients, reclining god-like at their feasts, how had they spurned such pedantries."

As soon as the ladies had disported themselves among the sugar-plums, the tables were suddenly removed, and the guests sat in a row against the wall. Then came in, ducking and scraping, two ecclesiastics with lutes, and kneeled at the cardinal's feet and there sang the service of the day; then retired with a deep obeisance: in answer to which the cardinal fingered his skull-cap as our late Iron Duke his hat: the company dispersed, and Gerard had dined with a cardinal, and one that had thrice just missed being pope.

But greater honor was in store.

One day the cardinal sent for him, and, after praising the beauty of his work, took him in his coach to the Vatican, and up a private stair to a luxurious little room with a great oriel window. Here were inkstands, sloping frames for writing on, and all the instruments of art. The cardinal whispered a courtier, and presently the Pope's private secretary appeared with a glorious, grimy old MS. of "Plutarch's Lives." And soon Gerard was seated alone copying it, awe-struck, yet half delighted at the thought that his Holiness would handle his work and read it.

The papal inkstands were all glorious externally; but within the ink was vile. But Gerard carried ever good ink, home-made, in a dirty little inkhorn: he prayed on his knees for a firm and skilful hand, and set to work.

One side of his room was nearly occupied by a massive curtain divided in the centre: but its ample folds overlapped. After a while, Gerard felt drawn to peep through that curtain. He resisted the impulse. It returned. It overpowered him. He left Plutarch; stole across the matted floor; took the folds of the curtain, and gently

gathered them up with his fingers, and putting his nose through the chink ran it against a cold steel halbert. Two soldiers armed *cap-à-pie* were holding their glittering weapons crossed in a triangle. Gerard drew swiftly back: but in that instant he heard the soft murmur of voices and saw a group of persons cringing before some hidden figure.

He never repeated his attempt to pry through the guarded curtain, but often eyed it. Every hour or so an ecclesiastic peeped in, eyed him, chilled him, and exit. All this was gloomy and mechanical. But the next day a gentleman, richly armed, bounced in, and glared at him. "What is toward here?" said he.

Gerard told him he was writing out Plutarch, with the help of the saints. The spark said he did not know the signor in question. Gerard explained the circumstances of time and space that had deprived the signor Plutarch of the advantage of the spark's conversation.

"Oh! one of those old dead Greeks they keep such a coil about."

"Ay, signor, one of them, who, being dead, yet live."

"I understand you not, young man," said the noble, with all the dignity of ignorance. "What did the old fellow write? Love stories?" and his eyes sparkled; "merry tales, like Boccaccio?"

"Nay; lives of heroes, and sages."

"Soldiers, and popes?"

"Soldiers, and princes."

"Wilt read me of them some day?"

"And willingly, signor. But what would they say who employ me, were I to break off work?"

"Oh, never heed that; know you not who I am? I am Jacques Bonaventura, nephew to his Holiness the Pope, and captain of his guards. And I came here to look after my fellows. I trow they have turned them

out of their room for you." Signor Bonaventura then hurried away. This lively companion, however, having acquired a habit of running into that little room, and finding Gerard good company, often looked in on him, and chattered ephemeralities, while Gerard wrote the immortal lives.

One day he came, a changed and moody man, and threw himself into a chair, crying, "Ah, traitress! traitress!" Gerard inquired what was his ill? "Traitress! traitress!" was the reply. Whereupon Gerard wrote Plutarch. Then says Bonaventura, "I am melancholy; and for our Lady's sake read me a story out of Ser Plutarcho, to soothe my bile; in all that Greek is there nought about lovers betrayed?"

Gerard read him the life of Alexander. He got excited, marched about the room, and embracing the reader, vowed to shun "soft delights," that bed of nettles, and follow glory.

Who so happy now as Gerard? His art was honored, and fabulous prices paid for it; in a year or two he should return by sea to Holland, with good store of money, and set up with his beloved Margaret in Bruges, or Antwerp, or dear Augsburg, and end their days in peace, and love, and healthy, happy labor. His heart never strayed an instant from her.

In his prosperity he did not forget poor Pietro. He took the Fra Colonna to see his picture. The friar inspected it severely and closely, fell on the artist's neck, and carried the picture to one of the Colonnas, who gave a noble price for it.

Pietro descended to the first floor, and lived like a gentleman.

But Gerard remained in his garret. To increase his expenses would have been to postpone his return to Margaret. Luxury had no charms for the single-hearted one, when opposed to love.

Jacques Bonaventura made him acquainted with other gay young fellows. They loved him, and sought to entice him into vice, and other expenses. But he begged humbly to be excused. So he escaped that temptation. But a greater was behind.

CHAPTER XI.

Fra Colonna had the run of the Pope's library, and sometimes left off work at the same hour and walked the city with Gerard; on which occasions the happy artist saw all things *en beau*, and was wrapped up in the grandeur of Rome and its churches, palaces, and ruins.

The friar granted the ruins, but threw cold water on the rest.

"This place Rome? It is but the tomb of mighty Rome." He showed Gerard that twenty or thirty feet of the old triumphal arches were underground, and that the modern streets ran over ancient palaces, and over the tops of columns; and coupling this with the comparatively narrow limits of the modern city, and the gigantic vestiges of antiquity that peeped above ground here and there, he uttered a somewhat remarkable simile. "I tell thee this village they call Rome is but as one of those swallows' nests ye shall see built on the eaves of a decayed abbey."

"Old Rome must indeed have been fair then," said Gerard.

"Judge for yourself, my son; you see the great sewer, the work of the Romans in their very childhood, and shall outlast Vesuvius. You see the fragments of the Temple of Peace. How would you look could you see also the Capitol with its five and twenty temples? Do but note this Monte Savello: what is it, an it please you, but the ruins of the ancient theatre of Marcellus? and as for Testacio, one of the highest hills in modern Rome, it is but an ancient dust-heap; the women of old Rome

flung their broken pots and pans there, and lo, a mountain.

'Ex pede Herculem; ex ungue leonem.'"

Gerard listened respectfully, but when the holy friar proceeded by analogy to imply that the moral superiority of the heathen Romans was proportionably grand, he resisted stoutly. "Has then the world lost by Christ his coming?" said he; but blushed, for he felt himself reproaching his benefactor.

"Saints forbid!" said the friar. "'Twere heresy to say so." And, having made this direct concession, he proceeded gradually to evade it by subtle circumlocution, and reached the forbidden door by the spiral back staircase. In the midst of all which they came to a church with a knot of persons in the porch. A demon was being exorcised within. Now Fra Colonna had a way of uttering a curious sort of little moan, when things Zeno or Epicurus would not have swallowed were presented to him as facts. This moan conveyed to such as had often heard it, not only strong dissent, but pity for human credulity, ignorance, and error, especially, of course, when it blinded men to the merits of Pagandom.

The friar moaned, and said, "Then come away."

"Nay, father, prithee! prithee! I ne'er saw a divell cast out."

The friar accompanied Gerard into the church, but had a good shrug first. There they found the demoniac forced down on his knees before the altar with a scarf tied round his neck, by which the officiating priest held him like a dog in a chain.

Not many persons were present, for fame had put forth that the last demon cast out in that church went no farther than into one of the company: "as a cony ferreted out of one burrow runs to the next."

When Gerard and the friar came up, the priest seemed to think there were now spectators enough, and began.

He faced the demoniac, breviary in hand, and first set himself to learn the individual's name with whom he had to deal.

"Come out, Ashtaroth. Oho! it is not you, then. Come out, Belial. Come out, Tatzi. Come out, Eza. No, he trembles not. Come out, Azymoth. Come out, Feriander. Come out, Foletho. Come out, Astyma. Come out, Nebul. Aha! what, have I found ye? 'tis thou, thou reptile, at thine old tricks. Let us pray! —

"O Lord, we pray thee to drive the foul fiend Nebul out of this thy creature: out of his hair, and his eyes, out of his nose, out of his mouth, out of his ears, out of his gums, out of his teeth, out of his shoulders, out of his arms, legs, loins, stomach, bowels, thighs, knees, calves, feet, ankles, finger-nails, toe-nails, and soul. Amen."

The priest then rose from his knees, and turning to the company said, with quiet geniality, "Gentles, we have here as obstinate a divell as you may see in a summer day." Then, facing the patient, he spoke to him with great rigor, sometimes addressing the man, and sometimes the fiend, and they answered him in turn through the same mouth, now saying that they hated those holy names the priest kept uttering, and now complaining they did feel so bad in their inside.

It was the priest who first confounded the victim and the culprit in idea, by pitching into the former, cuffing him soundly, kicking him, and spitting repeatedly in his face. Then he took a candle and lighted it, and turned it down, and burned it till it burned his fingers, when he dropped it double-quick. Then took the custodial, and showed the patient the *Corpus Domini* within. Then burned another candle as before, but more cautiously;

then spoke civilly to the demoniac in his human character, dismissed him, and received the compliments of the company.

"Good father," said Gerard, "how you have their names by heart. Our northern priests have no such exquisite knowledge of the hellish squadrons."

"Ay, young man, here we know all their names, and eke their ways, the reptiles. This Nebul is a bitter hard one to hunt out."

He then told the company in the most affable way several of his experiences, concluding with his feat of yesterday, when he drove a great hulking fiend out of a woman by her mouth, leaving behind him certain nails, and pins, and a tuft of his own hair, and cried out in a voice of anguish, "'Tis not thou that conquers me. See that stone on the window-sill. Know that the angel Gabriel coming down to earth once lighted on that stone; 'tis that has done my business."

The friar moaned. "And you believed him?"

"Certes! who, but an infidel, had discredited a revelation so precise?"

"What, believe the father of lies? That is pushing credulity beyond the age."

"Oh, a liar does not always lie."

"Ay doth he, whenever he tells an improbable story to begin, and shows you a holy relic; arms you against the satanic host. Fiends (if any) be not so simple. Shouldst have answered him out of antiquity, —

'Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.'

Some blackguard chopped his wife's head off on that stone, young man; you take my word for it." And the friar hurried Gerard away.

"Alack, father, I fear you abashed the good priest."

"Ay, by Pollux," said the friar, with a chuckle; "I

blistered him with a single touch of 'Socratic interrogation.' What modern can parry the weapons of antiquity?"

One afternoon, when Gerard had finished his day's work, a fine lackey came and demanded his attendance at the palace Cesarini. He went, and was ushered into a noble apartment; there was a girl seated in it, working on a tapestry. She rose and left the room, and said she would let her mistress know.

A good hour did Gerard cool his heels in that great room, and at last he began to fret. "These nobles think nothing of a poor fellow's time." However, just as he was making up his mind to slip out, and go about his business, the door opened, and a superb beauty entered the room, followed by two maids. It was the young princess of the house of Cesarini. She came in talking rather loudly and haughtily to her dependents, but at sight of Gerard lowered her voice to a very feminine tone, and said, "Are you the writer, messer?"

"I am, signora."

"'Tis well." She then seated herself; Gerard and her maids remained standing.

"What is your name, good youth?"

"Gerard, signora."

"Gerard? body of Bacchus! is that the name of a human creature?"

"It is a Dutch name, signora. I was born at Tergou, in Holland."

"A harsh name, girls, for so well-favored a youth; what say you?"

The maids assented warmly.

"What did I send for him for?" inquired the lady, with lofty languor. "Ah, I remember. Be seated, Ser Gerardo, and write me a letter to Ercole Orsini, my lover; at least he says so."

Gerard seated himself, took out paper and ink, and looked up to the princess for instructions.

She, seated on a much higher chair, almost a throne, looked down at him with eyes equally inquiring.

"Well, Gerardo?"

"I am ready, your excellence."

"Write, then."

"I but await the words."

"And who, think you, is to provide *them?*"

"Who but your grace, whose letter it is to be?"

"Gramercy! what, you writers, find you not the words? What avails your art without the words? I doubt you are an impostor, Gerardo."

"Nay, signora, I am none. I might make shift to put your highness's speech into grammar, as well as writing, but I cannot interpret your silence. Therefore, speak what is in your heart, and I will empaper it before your eyes."

"But there is nothing in my heart. And sometimes I think I have got no heart."

"What is in your mind, then?"

"But there is nothing in my mind; nor my head neither."

"Then why write at all?"

"Why, indeed? That is the first word of sense either you or I have spoken, Gerardo. Pestilence seize him! why writeth he not first? then I could say nay to this, and ay to that, withouten headache. Also, is it a lady's part to say the first word?"

"No, signora; the last."

"It is well spoken, Gerardo. Ha! ha! Shalt have a gold piece for thy wit. Give me my purse!" And she paid him for the article on the nail *à la moyen âge.* Money never yet chilled zeal. Gerard, after getting a gold piece so cheap, felt bound to pull her out of her

difficulty; if the wit of man might achieve it. "Signorina," said he, "these things are only hard because folk attempt too much; are artificial, and labor phrases. Do but figure to yourself the signor you love" —

"I love him not."

"Well, then, the signor you love not — seated at this table, and dict to me just what you would say to him."

"Well, if he sat there, I should say, 'Go away.'"

Gerard, who was flourishing his pen by way of preparation, laid it down with a groan.

"And when he was gone," said Floretta, "your highness would say, 'Come back.'"

"Like enough, wench. Now silence, all, and let me think. He pestered me to write, and I promised; so mine honor is engaged. What lie shall I tell the Gerardo to tell the fool?" and she turned her head away from them and fell into deep thought, with her noble chin resting on her white hand, half clenched.

She was so lovely and statuesque, and looked so inspired with thoughts celestial, as she sat thus, impregnating herself with mendacity, that Gerard forgot all, except art, and proceeded eagerly to transfer that exquisite profile to paper.

He had very nearly finished when the fair statue turned brusquely round and looked at him.

"Nay, signora," said he, a little peevishly, "for heaven's sake change not your posture; 'twas perfect. See, you are nearly finished."

All eyes were instantly on the work, and all tongues active. "How like! and done in a minute: nay, methinks her highness's chin is not quite so" —

"Oh, a touch will make that right."

"What a pity 'tis not colored. I'm all for colors. Hang black and white! And her highness hath such a lovely skin. Take away her skin, and half her beauty is lost."

"Peace. Can you color, Ser Gerardo?"

"Ay, signorina. I am a poor hand at oils; there shines my friend Pietro: but in this small way I can tint you to the life, if you have time to waste on such vanity."

"Call you this vanity? And for time, it hangs on me like lead. Send for your colors now, — quick, this moment, — for love of all the saints."

"Nay, signorina, I must prepare them. I could come at the same time to-morrow."

"So be it. And you, Floretta, see that he be admitted at all hours. Alack! Leave my head! leave my head!"

"Forgive me, signora; I thought to prepare it at home to receive the colors. But I will leave it. And now let us despatch the letter."

"What letter?"

"To the Signor Orsini."

"And shall I waste my *time* on such *vanity* as writing letters — and to that empty creature, to whom I am as indifferent as the moon? Nay, not indifferent, for I have just discovered my real sentiments. I hate him and despise him. Girls, I here forbid you once for all to mention that signor's name to me again; else I'll whip you till the blood comes. You know how I can lay on when I'm roused."

"We do; we do."

"Then provoke me not to it;" and her eye flashed daggers, and she turned to Gerard all instantaneous honey. *"Addio, il Gerar-do."* And Gerard bowed himself out of this velvet tiger's den.

He came next day and colored her; and next he was set to make a portrait of her on a large scale; and then a full-length figure; and he was obliged to set apart two hours in the afternoon for drawing and painting this princess, whose beauty and vanity were prodigious, and candidates for a portrait of her numerous. Here the

thriving Gerard found a new and fruitful source of income.

Margaret seemed nearer and nearer.

It was Holy Thursday. No work this day. Fra Colonna and Gerard sat in a window and saw the religious processions. Their number and pious ardor thrilled Gerard with the devotion that now seemed to animate the whole people, lately bent on earthly joys.

Presently the Pope came pacing majestically at the head of his cardinals, in a red hat, white cloak, a capuchin of red velvet, and riding a lovely white Neapolitan barb, caparisoned with red velvet fringed and tasselled with gold; a hundred horsemen, armed *cap-à-pie*, rode behind him with their lances erected, the butt-end resting on the man's thigh. The cardinals went uncovered, all but one, de Medicis, who rode close to the Pope and conversed with him as with an equal. At every fifteen steps the Pope stopped a single moment, and gave the people his blessing, then on again.

Gerard and the friar now came down, and, threading some by-streets, reached the portico of one of the seven churches. It was hung with black, and soon the Pope and cardinals, who had entered the church by another door, issued forth, and stood with torches on the steps, separated by barriers from the people; then a canon read a Latin bull, excommunicating several persons by name, especially such princes as were keeping the Church out of any of her temporal possessions.

At this awful ceremony Gerard trembled, and so did the people. But two of the cardinals spoiled the effect by laughing unreservedly the whole time.

When this was ended, the black cloth was removed, and revealed a gay panoply; and the Pope blessed the people, and ended by throwing his torch among them;

so did two cardinals. Instantly there was a scramble for the torches: they were fought for, and torn in pieces by the candidates, so devoutly that small fragments were gained at the price of black eyes, bloody noses, and burnt fingers; in which hurtling his Holiness and suite withdrew in peace.

And now there was a cry, and the crowd rushed to a square where was a large, open stage: several priests were upon it praying. They rose, and with great ceremony donned red gloves. Then one of their number kneeled, and with signs of the lowest reverence drew forth from a shrine a square frame, like that of a mirror, and inside was as it were the impression of a face.

It was the *Vera icon*, or true impression of our Saviour's face, taken at the very moment of his most mortal agony for us. Received as it was without a grain of doubt, imagine how it moved every Christian heart.

The people threw themselves on their faces when the priest raised it on high; and cries of pity were in every mouth, and tears in almost every eye. After a while the people rose, and then the priests went round the platform, showing it for a single moment to the nearest; and at each sight loud cries of pity and devotion burst forth.

Soon after this the friends fell in with a procession of Flagellants flogging their bare shoulders till the blood ran streaming down; but without a sign of pain in their faces, and many of them laughing and jesting as they lashed. The bystanders out of pity offered them wine; they took it, but few drank it; they generally used it to free the tails of the cat, which were hard with clotted blood, and make the next stroke more effective. Most of them were boys, and a young woman took pity on one fair urchin. "Alas! dear child," said she, "why wound thy white skin so?" "*Basta*," said he, laughing, "'tis for your sins I do it, not for mine."

"Hear you that?" said the friar. "Show me the whip that can whip the vanity out of man's heart! The young monkey! how knoweth he that stranger is a sinner more than he?"

"Father," said Gerard, "surely this is not to our Lord's mind. He was so pitiful."

"Our Lord?" said the friar, crossing himself. "What has He to do with this? This was a custom in Rome six hundred years before He was born. The boys used to go through the streets at the Lupercalia, flogging themselves. And the married women used to shove in, and try and get a blow from the monkeys' scourges; for these blows conferred fruitfulness — in those days. A foolish trick this flagellation, but interesting to the bystander; reminds him of the grand old heathen. We are so prone to forget all we owe them."

Next they got into one of the seven churches, and saw the Pope give the mass. The ceremony was imposing, but again spoiled by the inconsistent conduct of the cardinals, and other prelates, who sat about the altar with their hats on, chattering all through the mass like a flock of geese.

The eucharist in both kinds was tasted by an official before the Pope would venture on it: and this surprised Gerard beyond measure. "Who is that base man? and what doth he there?"

"Oh, that is the *Preguste*, and he tastes the eucharist by way of precaution. This is the country for poison; and none fall oftener by it than the poor Popes."

"Alas! so I have heard; but after the miraculous change of the bread and wine to Christ his body and blood, poison cannot remain; gone is the bread with all its properties and accidents; gone is the wine."

"So says faith; but experience tells another tale. Scores have died in Italy, poisoned in the host."

"And I tell you, father, that were both bread and wine charged with direst poison before his Holiness had consecrated them, yet after consecration I would take them both withouten fear."

"So would I, but for the fine arts."

"What mean you?"

"Marry, that I would be as ready to leave the world as thou, were it not for those arts which beautify existence here below, and make it dear to men of sense and education. No: so long as the Nine Muses strew my path with roses of learning and art, me may Apollo inspire with wisdom and caution, that, knowing the wiles of my countrymen, I may eat poison neither at God's altar nor at a friend's table, since, wherever I eat it or drink it, it will assuredly cut short my mortal thread; and I am writing a book — heart and soul in it — 'The Dream of Polifilo,' the man of many arts. So name not poison to me till that is finished and copied."

And now the great bells of St. John Lateran's were rung with a clash at short intervals, and the people hurried thither to see the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Gerard and the friar got a good place in the church, and there was a great curtain, and, after long and breathless expectation of the people, this curtain was drawn by jerks, and at a height of about thirty feet were two human heads with bearded faces, that seemed alive. They were shown no longer than the time to say an Ave Maria, and then the curtain drawn. But they were shown in this fashion three times. St. Peter's complexion was pale, his face oval, his beard gray and forked; his head crowned with a papal mitre. St. Paul was dark skinned, with a thick, square beard; his face also and head were more square and massive, and full of resolution.

Gerard was awe-struck. The friar approved after his fashion.

"This exhibition of the *imagines*, or waxen effigies of heroes and demigods, is a venerable custom, and inciteth the vulgar to virtue by great and visible examples."

"Waxen images? What, are they not the apostles themselves, embalmed, or the like?"

The friar moaned.

"They did not exist in the year 800. The great old Roman families always produced at their funerals a series of these *imagines*, thereby tying past and present history together, and showing the populace the features of far-famed worthies. I can conceive nothing more thrilling or instructive. But then the effigies were portraits made during life or at the hour of death. These of St. Paul and St. Peter are moulded out of pure fancy."

"Ah! say not so, father."

"But the worst is, this humor of showing them up on a shelf, and half in the dark, and by snatches, and with the poor mountebank trick of a drawn curtain.

'Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic incredulus odi.'

Enough; the men of this day are not the men of old. Let us have done with these new-fangled mummeries, and go among the Pope's books; there we shall find the wisdom we shall vainly hunt in the streets of modern Rome."

And, this idea having once taken root, the good friar plunged and tore through the crowd, and looked neither to the right hand nor to the left, till he had escaped the glories of the Holy Week, which had brought fifty thousand strangers to Rome; and had got nice and quiet among the dead in the library of the Vatican.

Presently, going into Gerard's room, he found a hot dispute afoot, between him and Jacques Bonaventura. That spark had come in, all steel from head to toe; doffed helmet, puffed, and railed most scornfully on a

ridiculous ceremony, at which he and his soldiers had been compelled to attend the Pope; to wit, the blessing of the beasts of burden.

Gerard said it was not ridiculous: nothing a pope did could be ridiculous.

The argument grew warm, and the friar stood grimly neuter, waiting like the stork that ate the frog and the mouse at the close of their combat, to grind them both between the jaws of antiquity: when lo, the curtain was gently drawn, and there stood a venerable old man in a purple skull-cap, with a beard like white floss silk, looking at them with a kind though feeble smile.

"Happy youth," said he, "that can heat itself over such matters."

They all fell on their knees. It was the Pope.

"Nay, rise, my children," said he, almost peevishly. "I came not into this corner to be in state. How goes Plutarch?"

Gerard brought his work, and kneeling on one knee presented it to his Holiness, who had seated himself, the others standing.

His Holiness inspected it with interest. "'Tis excellently writ," said he.

Gerard's heart beat with delight.

"Ah! this Plutarch, he had a wondrous art, Francesco. How each character standeth out alive on his page: how full of nature each, yet how unlike his fellow!"

Jacques Bonaventura. Give me the Signor Boccaccio.

His Holiness. An excellent narrator, Capitano, and writeth exquisite Italian. But in spirit a thought too monotonous. Monks and nuns were never all unchaste: one or two such stories were right pleasant and diverting; but five score paint his time falsely, and sadden the heart of such as love mankind. Moreover he hath no

skill at characters. Now this Greek is supreme in that great art: he carveth them with pen: and, turning his page, see into how real and great a world we enter of war, and policy, and business, and love in its own place: for with him, as in the great world, men are not all running after a wench. With this great open field compare me not the narrow garden of Boccaccio, and his little mill-round of dishonest pleasures.

"Your Holiness, they say, hath not disdained to write a novel."

"My holiness hath done more foolish things than one, whereof it repents too late. When I wrote novels I little thought to be head of the Church."

"I search in vain for a copy of it to add to my poor library."

"It is well. Then the strict orders I gave four years ago to destroy every copy in Italy, have been well discharged. However, for your comfort, on my being made Pope, some fool turned it into French: so that you may read it, at the price of exile."

"Reduced to this strait we throw ourselves on your Holiness's generosity. Vouchsafe to give us your infallible judgment on it."

"Gently, gently, good Francesco. A pope's novels are not matters of faith. I can but give you my sincere impression. Well, then, the work in question had, as far as I remember, all the vices of Boccaccio, without his choice Italian."

Fra Colonna. Your Holiness is known for slighting Æneas Silvius as other men never slighted him. I did him injustice to make you his judge. Perhaps your Holiness will decide more justly between these two boys — about blessing the beasts.

The Pope demurred. In speaking of Plutarch he had brightened up for a moment, and his eye had even flashed;

but his general manner was as unlike what youthful females expect in a Pope as you can conceive. I can only describe it in French. *Le gentilhomme blasé.* A high-bred and highly cultivated gentleman, who had done and said and seen and known everything, and whose body was nearly worn out. But double languor seemed to seize him at the father's proposal.

"My poor Francesco," said he, "bethink thee that I have had a life of controversy, and am sick on't; sick as death. Plutarch drew me to this calm retreat: not divinity."

"Nay, but, your Holiness, for moderating of strife between two hot young bloods.

'*Μακαριοι οἱ ειρηνοποιοι.*' "

"And know you nature so ill, as to think either of these high-mettled youths will reck what a poor old Pope saith?"

"Oh! your Holiness," broke in Gerard, blushing and gasping, "sure, here is one who will treasure your words all his life as words from heaven."

"In that case," said the Pope, "I am fairly caught. As Francesco here would say, —

'*ουκ εστιν ὅστις εστ' ανηρ ελευθερος.*'

I came to taste that eloquent heathen, dear to me e'en as to thee, thou Paynim monk; and I must talk divinity, or something next door to it. But the youth hath a good and a winning face, and writeth Greek like an angel. Well, then, my children, to comprehend the ways of the Church, we should still rise a little above the earth, since the Church is between heaven and earth, and interprets betwixt them.

"The question is then, not how vulgar men feel, but how the common Creator of man and beast doth feel,

towards the lower animals. This, if we are too proud to search for it in the lessons of the Church, the next best thing is to go to the most ancient history of men and animals."

Colonna. Herodotus.

"Nay, nay; in this matter Herodotus is but a mushroom. Finely were we sped for ancient history, if we depended on your Greeks, who did but write on the last leaf of that great book, Antiquity."

The friar groaned. Here was a pope uttering heresy against his demigods.

"'Tis the Vulgate I speak of. A history that handles matters three thousand years before him pedants call 'the Father of History.'"

Colonna. Oh! the Vulgate? I cry your Holiness mercy. How you frightened me. I quite forgot the Vulgate.

"Forgot it? art sure thou ever readst it, Francesco *mio?*"

"Not quite, your Holiness. 'Tis a pleasure I have long promised myself, the first vacant moment. Hitherto these grand old heathen have left me small time for recreation."

His Holiness. First then you will find in Genesis that God, having created the animals, drew a holy pleasure, undefinable by us, from contemplating of their beauty. Was it wonderful? See their myriad forms; their lovely hair, and eyes, their grace, and of some the power and majesty: the color of others, brighter than roses or rubies. And when, for man's sin, not their own, they were destroyed, yet were two of each kind spared.

"And when the ark and its trembling inmates tumbled solitary on the world of water, then, saith the Word, 'God remembered Noah, *and the cattle that were with him in the ark.*'

"Thereafter God did write His rainbow in the sky as a bond that earth should be flooded no more; and between whom the bond? between God and man? nay: between God and man, *and every living creature of all flesh;* or my memory fails me with age. In Exodus God commanded that the cattle should share the sweet blessing of the one day's rest. Moreover He forbade to muzzle the ox that trod out the corn. 'Nay, let the poor overwrought soul snatch a mouthful as he goes his toilsome round: the bulk of the grain shall still be for man.' Ye will object perchance that St. Paul, commenting this, saith rudely, 'Doth God care for oxen?' Verily, had I been Peter, instead of the humblest of his successors, I had answered him: 'Drop thy theatrical poets, Paul, and read the Scriptures: then shalt thou know whether God careth only for men and sparrows, or for all His creatures. O Paul,' had I made bold to say, 'think not to learn God by looking into Paul's heart, nor any heart of man, but study that which He hath revealed concerning Himself.'

"Thrice he forbade the Jews to boil the kid in his mother's milk; not that this is cruelty, but want of thought and gentle sentiments, and so paves the way for downright cruelty. A prophet riding on an ass did meet an angel. Which of these two, *Paulo judice*, had seen the heavenly spirit? marry, the prophet. But it was not so. The man, his vision cloyed with sin, saw nought. The poor despised creature saw all. Nor is this recorded as miraculous. Poor proud things, we overrate ourselves. The angel had slain the prophet and spared the ass, but for that creature's clearer vision of essences divine. He said so, methinks. But in sooth I read it many years agone. Why did God spare repentant Nineveh? Because in that city were sixty thousand children, *besides much cattle.*

"Profane history and vulgar experience add their mite of witness. The cruel to animals end in cruelty to man; and strange and violent deaths, marked with retribution's bloody finger, have in all ages fallen from heaven on such as wantonly harm innocent beasts. This I myself have seen. All this duly weighed, and seeing that despite this Francesco's friends, the Stoics, who in their vanity say the creatures all subsist for man's comfort, there be snakes and scorpions which kill '*Dominum terræ*' with a nip, mosquitoes which eat him piecemeal, and tigers and sharks which crack him like an almond, we do well to be grateful to these true, faithful, patient, four-footed friends, which, in lieu of powdering us, put forth their strength to relieve our toils, and do feed us like mothers from their gentle dugs.

"Methinks then the Church is never more divine than in this benediction of our four-footed friends, which has revolted yon great theological authority, the captain of the Pope's guards; since here she inculcates humility and gratitude, and rises towards the level of the mind divine, and interprets God to man, God the creator, parent, and friend of man and beast.

"But all this, young gentles, you will please to receive, not as delivered by the Pope *ex cathedrâ*, but uttered carelessly, in a free hour, by an aged clergyman. On that score you will perhaps do well to entertain it with some little consideration. For old age must surely bring a man somewhat, in return for his digestion (his *dura puerorum ilia*, eh, Francesco?), which it carries away."

Such was the purport of the Pope's discourse: but the manner high-bred, languid, kindly, and free from all tone of dictation. He seemed to be gently probing the matter in concert with his hearers, not playing Sir Oracle. At the bottom of all which was doubtless a slight touch of

humbug, but the humbug that embellishes life; and all sense of it was lost in the subtle Italian grace of the thing.

"I seem to hear the oracle of Delphi," said Fra Colonna, enthusiastically.

"I call that good sense," shouted Jacques Bonaventura.

"Oh, captain, good sense!" said Gerard, with a deep and tender reproach.

The Pope smiled on Gerard. "Cavil not at words; that was an unheard-of concession from a rival theologian."

He then asked for all Gerard's work, and took it away in his hand. But, before going, he gently pulled Fra Colonna's ear, and asked him whether he remembered when they were schoolfellows together, and robbed the Virgin by the roadside of the money dropped into her box. "You took a flat stick and applied bird-lime to the top, and drew the money out through the chink, you rogue," said his Holiness, severely.

"To every signor his own honor," replied Fra Colonna. "It was your Holiness's good wit invented the manœuvre. I was but the humble instrument."

"It is well. Doubtless you know 'twas sacrilege."

"Of the first water; but I did it in such good company, it troubles me not."

"Humph! I have not even that poor consolation. What did we spend it in, dost mind?"

"Can your Holiness ask? why, sugar-plums."

"What, all on't?"

"Every doit."

"These are delightful reminiscences, my Francesco. Alas! I am getting old. I shall not be here long; and I am sorry for it for thy sake. They will go and burn thee when I am gone; art far more a heretic than Huss, whom I saw burned with these eyes; and oh, he died like a martyr!"

"Ay, your Holiness; but I believe in the Pope, and Huss did not."

"Fox! They will not burn thee: wood is too dear. Adieu, old playmate; adieu, young gentlemen; an old man's blessing be on you."

That afternoon the Pope's secretary brought Gerard a little bag: in it were several gold pieces.

He added them to his store.

Margaret seemed nearer and nearer.

For some time past, too, it appeared as if the fairies had watched over him. Baskets of choice provisions and fruits were brought to his door by porters, who knew not who had employed them, or affected ignorance; and one day came a jewel in a letter, but no words.

At this point the suspicions of his landlady broke out. "This is none of thy patrons, silly boy: this is some lady that hath fallen in love with thy sweet face. Marry, I blame her not."

CHAPTER XII.

The Princess Clælia ordered a full-length portrait of herself. Gerard advised her to employ his friend Pietro Vanucci.

But she declined. "'Twill be time to put a slight on the Gerardo when his work discontents me." Then Gerard, who knew he was an excellent draughtsman, but not so good a colorist, begged her to stand to him as a Roman statue. He showed her how closely he could mimic marble on paper. She consented at first, but demurred when this enthusiast explained to her that she must wear the tunic, toga, and sandals of the ancients.

"Why, I had as lieve be presented in my smock," said she with mediæval frankness.

"Alack! signorina," said Gerard, "you have surely never noted the ancient habit, so free, so ample, so simple, yet so noble; and most becoming your highness, to whom Heaven hath given the Roman features, and eke a shapely arm and hand, hid in modern guise."

"What, can you flatter, like the rest, Gerardo? Well, give me time to think on't. Come o' Saturday, and then I will say ay or nay."

The respite thus gained was passed in making the tunic and toga, etc., and trying them on in her chamber to see whether they suited her style of beauty well enough to compensate their being a thousand years out of date.

Gerard, hurrying along to this interview, was suddenly arrested and rooted to earth at a shop-window.

His quick eye had discerned in that window a copy of

Lactantius, lying open. "That is fairly writ, any way," thought he.

He eyed it a moment more with all his eyes.

It was not written at all. It was printed.

Gerard groaned. "I am sped: mine enemy is at the door. The press is in Rome."

He went into the shop, and, affecting nonchalance, inquired how long the printing-press had been in Rome. The man said he believed there was no such thing in the city. "Oh, the Lactantius; that was printed on the top of the Apennines."

"What, did the printing-press fall down there out o' the moon?"

"Nay, messer," said the trader laughing, "it shot up there out of Germany. See the title-page."

Gerard took the Lactantius eagerly, and saw the following: —

Operâ et impensis Sweynheim et Pannartz
Alumnorum Joannis Fust.
Impressum Subiacis. A.D. 1465.

"Will ye buy, messer? See how fair and even be the letters. Few are left can write like that; and scarce a quarter of the price."

"I would fain have it," said Gerard sadly, "but my heart will not let me. Know that I am a calligraph, and these disciples of Fust run after me round the world a-taking the bread out of my mouth. But I wish them no ill. Heaven forbid!" And he hurried from the shop.

"Dear Margaret," said he to himself, "we must lose no time: we must make our hay while shines the sun. One month more, and an avalanche of printer's type shall roll down on Rome from those Apennines, and lay us waste that writers be."

And he almost ran to the Princess Clælia.

He was ushered into an apartment new to him. It was not very large, but most luxurious; a fountain played in the centre, and the floor was covered with the skins of panthers, dressed with the hair, so that no footfall could be heard. The room was an antechamber to the princess's boudoir, for on one side there was no door, but an ample curtain of gorgeous tapestry.

Here Gerard was left alone till he became quite uneasy, and doubted whether the maid had not shown him to the wrong place.

These doubts were agreeably dissipated.

A light step came swiftly behind the curtain: it parted in the middle, and there stood a figure the heathens might have worshipped. It was not quite Venus, nor quite Minerva, but between the two; nobler than Venus, more womanly than Jupiter's daughter. Toga, tunic, sandals; nothing was modern. And as for beauty, that is of all times.

Gerard started up, and all the artist in him flushed with pleasure.

"Oh!" he cried, innocently, and gazed in rapture.

This added the last charm to his model; a light blush tinted her cheek, and her eyes brightened, and her mouth smiled with delicious complacency at this genuine tribute to her charms.

When they had looked at one another so some time, and she saw Gerard's eloquence was confined to ejaculating and gazing, she spoke. "Well, Gerardo, thou seest I have made myself an antique monster for thee."

"A monster? I doubt Fra Colonna would fall down and adore your highness, seeing you so habited."

"Nay, I care not to be adored by an old man. I would liever be loved by a young one; of my own choosing."

Gerard took out his pencils, arranged his canvas,

which he had covered with stout paper, and set to work; and so absorbed was he that he had no mercy on his model. At last, after near an hour in one posture, "Gerardo," said she, faintly, "I can stand so no more, even for thee."

"Sit down and rest awhile, signora."

"I thank thee," said she; and sinking into a chair turned pale and sighed.

Gerard was alarmed, and saw also he had been inconsiderate. He took water from the fountain, and was about to throw it in her face; but she put up a white hand deprecatingly: "Nay, hold it to my brow with thine hand: prithee, do not fling it at me!"

Gerard timidly and hesitating applied his wet hand to her brow.

"Ah!" she sighed, "that is reviving. Again."

He applied it again. She thanked him, and asked him to ring a little hand-bell on the table. He did so, and a maid came, and was sent to Floretta with orders to bring a large fan.

Floretta speedily came with the fan.

She no sooner came near the princess, than that lady's high-bred nostrils suddenly expanded like a blood horse's. "Wretch!" said she; and rising up with a sudden return to vigor, seized Floretta with her left hand, twisted it in her hair, and with the right hand boxed her ears severely three times.

Floretta screamed and blubbered; but obtained no mercy.

The antique toga left quite disengaged a bare arm, that now seemed as powerful as it was beautiful; it rose and fell like the piston of a modern steam-engine, and heavy slaps resounded one after another on Floretta's shoulders; the last one drove her sobbing and screaming through the curtain, and there she was heard crying bitterly for some time after.

"Saints of heaven!" cried Gerard, "what is amiss? what hath she done?"

"She knows right well. 'Tis not the first time. The nasty toad! I'll learn her to come to me stinking of the musk-cat."

"Alas! signora, 'twas a small fault methinks."

"A small fault? Nay, 'twas a foul fault." She added with an amazing sudden descent to humility and sweetness, "Are you wroth with me for beating her, Gerar-do?"

"Signora, it ill becomes me to school you; but methinks such as Heaven appoints to govern others should govern themselves."

"That is true, Gerardo. How wise you are, to be so young." She then called the other maid, and gave her a little purse. "Take that to Floretta, and tell her 'the Gerardo' hath interceded for her; and so I must needs forgive her. There, Gerardo."

Gerard colored all over at the compliment; but not knowing how to turn a phrase equal to the occasion, asked her if he should resume her picture.

"Not yet; beating that hussy hath somewhat breathed me. I'll sit awhile, and you shall talk to me. I know you can talk, an it pleases you, as rarely as you draw."

"That were easily done."

"Do it then, Gerardo."

Gerard was taken aback.

"But, signora, I know not what to say. This is sudden."

"Say your real mind. Say you wish you were anywhere but here."

"Nay, signora, that would not be sooth. I wish one thing though."

"Ay, and what is that?" said she, gently.

"I wish I could have drawn you as you were beating

that poor lass. You were awful, yet lovely. Oh, what a subject for a Pythoness!"

"Alas! he thinks but of his art. And why keep such a coil about my beauty, Gerardo? You are far fairer than I am. You are more like Apollo than I to Venus. Also, you have lovely hair, and lovely eyes — but you know not what to do with them."

"Ay, do I. To draw you, signora."

"Ah, yes; you can see my features with them; but you cannot see what any Roman gallant had seen long ago in your place. Yet sure you must have noted how welcome you are to me, Gerardo?"

"I can see your highness is always passing kind to me; a poor stranger like me."

"No, I am not, Gerardo. I have often been cold to you; rude sometimes; and you are so simple you see not the cause. Alas! I feared for my own heart. I feared to be your slave. I who have hitherto made slaves. Ah! Gerardo, I am unhappy. Ever since you came here I have lived upon your visits. The day you are to come, I am bright. The other days I am listless, and wish them fled. You are not like the Roman gallants. You make me hate them. You are ten times braver to my eye: and you are wise and scholarly, and never flatter and lie. I scorn a man that lies. Gerar-do, teach me thy magic; teach me to make thee as happy by my side as I am still by thine."

As she poured out these strange words, the princess's mellow voice sunk almost to a whisper, and trembled with half-suppressed passion, and her white hand stole timidly yet earnestly down Gerard's arm, till it rested like a soft bird upon his wrist, and as ready to fly away at a word.

Destitute of vanity and experience, wrapped up in his Margaret and his art, Gerard had not seen this revela-

tion coming, though it had come by regular and visible gradations.

He blushed all over. His innocent admiration of the regal beauty that besieged him, did not for a moment displace the absent Margaret's image. Yet it was regal beauty, and wooing with a grace and tenderness he had never even figured in imagination. How to check her without wounding her?

He blushed and trembled.

The siren saw, and encouraged him. "Poor Gerardo," she murmured, "fear not; none shall ever harm thee under my wing. Wilt not speak to me, Gerar-do *mio?*"

"Signora!" muttered Gerard, deprecatingly.

At that moment his eye, lowered in his confusion, fell on the shapely white arm and delicate hand that curled round his elbow like a tender vine, and it flashed across him how he had just seen that lovely limb employed on Floretta.

He trembled and blushed.

"Alas!" said the princess, "I scare him. Am I then so very terrible? Is it my Roman robe? I'll doff it, and habit me as when thou first camest to me. Mindest thou? 'Twas to write a letter to yon barren knight Ercole d'Orsini. Shall I tell thee? 'twas the sight of thee, and thy pretty ways, and thy wise words, made me hate him on the instant. I liked the fool well enough before; or wist I liked him. Tell me now how many times hast thou been here since then. Ah! thou knowest not; lovest me not, I doubt, as I love thee. Eighteen times, Gerardo. And each time dearer to me. The day thou comest not, 'tis night not day, to Clælia. Alas! I speak for both. Cruel boy, am I not worth a word? Hast every day a princess at thy feet? Nay, prithee, prithee, speak to me, Gerar-do."

"Signora," faltered Gerard, "what can I say, that were

not better left unsaid? Oh, evil day that ever I came here."

"Ah! say not so. 'Twas the brightest day ever shone on me, or indeed on thee. I'll make thee confess so much ere long, ungrateful one."

"Your highness," began Gerard, in a low, pleading voice.

"Call me Clælia, Gerar-do."

"Signora, I am too young and too little wise to know how I ought to speak to you, so as not to seem blind nor yet ungrateful. But this I know, I were both naught and ungrateful, and the worst foe e'er you had, did I take advantage of this mad fancy. Sure some ill spirit hath had leave to afflict you withal. For 'tis all unnatural that a princess adorned with every grace should abase her affections on a churl."

The princess withdrew her hand slowly from Gerard's wrist.

Yet as it passed lightly over his arm it seemed to linger a moment at parting.

"You fear the daggers of my kinsmen," said she, half sadly, half contemptuously.

"No more than I fear the bodkins of your women," said Gerard, haughtily. "But I fear God and the saints, and my own conscience."

"The truth, Gerardo, the truth! Hypocrisy sits awkwardly on thee. Princesses, while they are young, are not despised for love of God, but of some other woman. Tell me whom thou lovest; and if she is worthy thee I will forgive thee."

"No she in Italy, upon my soul."

"Ah! there is one somewhere, then. Where? where?"

"In Holland, my native country."

"Ah! Marie de Bourgogne is fair, they say. Yet she is but a child."

"Princess, she I love is not noble. She is as I am. Nor is she so fair as thou. Yet is she fair; and linked to my heart for ever by her virtues, and by all the dangers and griefs we have borne together, and for one another. Forgive me; but I would not wrong my Margaret for all the highest dames in Italy."

The slighted beauty started to her feet, and stood opposite him, as beautiful, but far more terrible than when she slapped Floretta, for then her cheeks were red, but now they were pale, and her eyes full of concentrated fury.

"This to my face, unmannered wretch!" she cried. "Was I born to be insulted, as well as scorned, by such as thou? Beware! We nobles brook no rivals. Bethink thee whether is better, the love of a Cesarini, or her hate: for after all I have said and done to thee, it must be love or hate between us and to the death. Choose now!"

He looked up at her with wonder and awe, as she stood towering over him in her Roman toga, offering this strange alternative.

He seemed to have affronted a goddess of antiquity; he, a poor puny mortal.

He sighed deeply, but spoke not.

Perhaps something in his deep and patient sigh touched a tender chord in that ungoverned creature; or perhaps the time had come for one passion to ebb and another to flow. The princess sank languidly into a seat, and the tears began to steal rapidly down her cheeks.

"Alas! alas!" said Gerard. "Weep not, sweet lady; your tears they do accuse me, and I am like to weep for company. My kind patron; be yourself! you will live to see how much better a friend I was to you than I seemed."

"I see it now, Gerardo," said the princess. "Friend

is the word: the only word can ever pass between us twain. I was mad. Any other man had ta'en advantage of my folly. You must teach me to be your friend and nothing more."

Gerard hailed this proposition with joy; and told her out of Cicero how godlike a thing was friendship, and how much better and rarer and more lasting than love: to prove to her he was capable of it, he even told her about Denys and himself.

She listened with her eyes half shut, watching his words to fathom his character, and learn his weak point.

At last, she addressed him calmly thus: "Leave me now, Gerardo, and come as usual to-morrow. You will find your lesson well bestowed." She held out her hand to him: he kissed it; and went away pondering deeply this strange interview, and wondering whether he had done prudently or not.

The next day he was received with marked distance, and the princess stood before him literally like a statue, and after a very short sitting, excused herself and dismissed him. Gerard felt the chilling difference: but said to himself, "She is wise." So she was in her way.

The next day he found the princess waiting for him, surrounded by young nobles flattering her to the skies. She and they treated him like a dog that could do one little trick they could not. The cavaliers in particular criticised his work with a mass of ignorance and insolence combined that made his cheeks burn.

The princess watched his face demurely with half-closed eyes, at each sting the insects gave him: and, when they had fled, had her doors closed against every one of them for their pains.

The next day Gerard found her alone: cold, and

silent. After standing to him so some time, she said, "You treated my company with less respect than became you."

"Did I, signora?"

"Did you? you fired up at the comments they did you the honor to make on your work."

"Nay, I said nought," observed Gerard.

"Oh, high looks speak as plain as high words. Your cheeks were red as blood."

"I was nettled a moment at seeing so much ignorance and ill-nature together."

"Now it is me, their hostess, you affront."

"Forgive me, signora, and acquit me of design. It would ill become me to affront the kindest patron and friend I have in Rome — but one."

"How humble we are all of a sudden. In sooth, Ser Gerardo, you are a capital feigner. You can insult or truckle at will."

"Truckle? to whom?"

"To me, for one; to one whom you affronted for a base-born girl like yourself, but whose patronage you claim all the same."

Gerard rose, and put his hand to his heart. "These are biting words, signora. Have I really deserved them?"

"Oh, what are words to an adventurer like you? cold steel is all you fear."

"I am no swashbuckler, yet I have met steel with steel; and methinks I had rather face your kinsmen's swords than your cruel tongue, lady. Why do you use me so?"

"Gerar-do, for no good reason, but because I am wayward, and shrewish, and curst, and because everybody admires me but you."

"I admire you too, signora. Your friends may flatter

you more; but, believe me, they have not the eye to see half your charms. Their babble yesterday showed me that. None admire you more truly, or wish you better, than the poor artist, who might not be your lover, but hoped to be your friend: but no, I see that may not be between one so high as you, and one so low as I."

"Ay! but it shall, Gerardo," said the princess eagerly. "I will not be so curst. Tell me now where abides thy Margaret, and I will give thee a present for her; and on that you and I will be friends."

"She is the daughter of a physician called Peter, and they bide at Sevenbergen; ah me, shall I e'er see it again?"

"'Tis well. Now go." And she dismissed him somewhat abruptly.

Poor Gerard! He began to wade in deep waters when he encountered this Italian princess; *callida et calida solis filia.* He resolved to go no more when once he had finished her likeness. Indeed, he now regretted having undertaken so long and laborious a task.

This resolution was shaken for a moment by his next reception, which was all gentleness and kindness.

After standing to him some time in her toga, she said she was fatigued, and wanted his assistance in another way: would he teach her to draw a little? He sat down beside her, and taught her to make easy lines. He found her wonderfully apt. He said so.

"I had a teacher before thee, Gerar-do. Ay, and one as handsome as thyself." She then went to a drawer, and brought out several heads drawn with a complete ignorance of the art, but with great patience and natural talent. They were all heads of Gerard, and full of spirit: and really not unlike. One was his very image. "There," said she, "now thou seest who was my teacher."

"Not I, signora."

"What, know you not who teaches us women to do all things? 'Tis love, Gerar-do. Love made me draw because thou drawest, Gerar-do. Love prints thine image in my bosom. My fingers touch the pen, and love supplies the want of art, and lo! thy beloved features lie upon the paper."

Gerard opened his eyes with astonishment at this return to an interdicted topic. "Oh, signora, you promised me to be friends and nothing more."

She laughed in his face. "How simple you are! who believes a woman promising nonsense, impossibilities? Friendship, foolish boy! who ever built that temple on red ashes? Nay, Gerar-do," she added gloomily, "between thee and me it must be love or hate."

"Which you will, signora," said Gerard firmly. "But for me, I will neither love nor hate you; but with your permission I will leave you." And he rose abruptly.

She rose too, pale as death, and said, "Ere thou leavest me so, know thy fate; outside that door are armed men who wait to slay thee at a word from me."

"But you will not speak that word, signora."

"That word I will speak. Nay, more; I shall noise it abroad it was for proffering brutal love to me thou wert slain; and I will send a special messenger to Sevenbergen: a cunning messenger, well taught his lesson. Thy Margaret shall know thee dead, and think thee faithless; now, go to thy grave, — a dog's. For a man thou art not."

Gerard turned pale, and stood dumb-stricken. "God have mercy on us both!"

"Nay, have thou mercy on her, and on thyself. She will never know in Holland what thou dost in Rome; unless I be driven to tell her my tale. Come, yield thee, Gerar-do *mio;* what will it cost thee to say thou lovest me? I ask thee but to feign it handsomely. Thou art

young: die not for the poor pleasure of denying a lady what—the shadow of a heart. Who will shed a tear for thee? I tell thee men will laugh, not weep, over thy tombstone—ah!" She ended in a little scream, for Gerard threw himself in a moment at her feet, and poured out in one torrent of eloquence the story of his love and Margaret's. How he had been imprisoned, hunted with bloodhounds for her, driven to exile for her; how she had shed her blood for him, and now pined at home. How he had walked through Europe environed by perils, torn by savage brutes, attacked by furious men with sword and axe and trap, robbed, shipwrecked, for her.

The princess trembled, and tried to get away from him: but he held her robe, he clung to her, he made her hear his pitiful story and Margaret's; he caught her hand, and clasped it between both his, and his tears fell fast on her hand, as he implored her to think on all the woes of the true lovers she would part: and what but remorse, swift and lasting, could come of so deep a love betrayed, and so false a love feigned, with mutual hatred lurking at the bottom.

In such moments none ever resisted Gerard.

The princess, after in vain trying to get away from him, for she felt his power over her, began to waver and sigh, and her bosom to rise and fall tumultuously, and her fiery eyes to fill.

"You conquer me," she sobbed. "You, or my better angel. Leave Rome!"

"I will, I will."

"If you breathe a word of my folly, it will be your last."

"Think not so poorly of me. You are my benefactress once more. Is it for me to slander you?"

"Go! I will send you the means. I know myself; if

you cross my path again, I shall kill you. *Addio;* my heart is broken."

She touched her bell. "Floretta," said she, in a choked voice, "take him safe out of the house, through my chamber, and by the side postern."

He turned at the door; she was leaning with one hand on a chair, crying, with averted head. Then he thought only of her kindness, and ran back and kissed her robe. She never moved.

Once clear of the house he darted home, thanking Heaven for his escape, soul and body.

"Landlady," said he, "there is one would pick a quarrel with me. What is to be done?"

"Strike him first, and at vantage! Get behind him; and then draw."

"Alas, I lack your Italian courage. To be serious, 'tis a noble."

"Oh, holy saints, that is another matter. Change thy lodging awhile, and keep snug; and alter the fashion of thy habits."

She then took him to her own niece, who let lodgings at some little distance, and installed him there.

He had little to do now, and no princess to draw, so he set himself resolutely to read that deed of Floris Brandt, from which he had hitherto been driven by the abominably bad writing. He mastered it, and saw at once that the loan on this land must have been paid over and over again by the rents, and that Ghysbrecht was keeping Peter Brandt out of his own.

"Fool! not to have read this before," he cried. He hired a horse and rode down to the nearest port. A vessel was to sail for Amsterdam in four days.

He took a passage; and paid a small sum to secure it.

"The land is too full of cut-throats for me," said he; "and 'tis lovely fair weather for the sea. Our Dutch

skippers are not shipwrecked like these bungling Italians."

When he returned home there sat his old landlady with her eyes sparkling.

"You are in luck, my young master," said she. "All the fish run to your net this day methinks. See what a lackey hath brought to our house! This bill and this bag."

Gerard broke the seals, and found it full of silver crowns. The letter contained a mere slip of paper with this line, cut out of some MS.: "*La lingua non ha osso, ma fa rompere il dosso.*"

"Fear me not!" said Gerard, aloud. "I'll keep mine between my teeth."

"What is that?"

"Oh, nothing. Am I not happy, dame? I am going back to my sweetheart with money in one pocket, and land in the other." And he fell to dancing round her.

"Well," said she, "I trow nothing could make you happier."

"Nothing, except to be there."

"Well, that is a pity, for I thought to make you a little happier with a letter from Holland."

"A letter? for me? where? how? who brought it? Oh, dame!"

"A stranger; a painter, with a reddish face and an outlandish name; Anselmin, I trow."

"Hans Memling? a friend of mine. God bless him!"

"Ay, that is it; Anselmin. He could scarce speak a word, but a had the wit to name thee: and a puts the letter down, and a nods and smiles, and I nods and smiles, and gives him a pint o' wine, and it went down him like a spoonful."

"That is Hans, honest Hans. Oh, dame, I am in luck to-day: but I deserve it. For, I care not if I tell you, I have just overcome a great temptation for dear Margaret's sake."

"Who is she?"

"Nay, I'd have my tongue cut out sooner than betray her, but oh, it *was* a temptation. Gratitude pushing me wrong, Beauty almost divine pulling me wrong: curses, reproaches, and, hardest of all to resist, gentle tears from eyes used to command. Sure some saint helped me; Anthony belike. But my reward is come."

"Ay is it, lad; and no farther off than my pocket. Come out, Gerard's reward," and she brought a letter out of her capacious pocket.

Gerard threw his arm round her neck and hugged her. "My best friend," said he, "my second mother, I'll read it to you."

"Ay, do, do."

"Alas! it is not from Margaret. This is not her hand." And he turned it about.

"Alack! but may be her bill is within. The lasses are aye for gliding in their bills under cover of another hand."

"True. Whose hand is this? sure I have seen it. I trow 'tis my dear friend the demoiselle Van Eyck. Oh, then Margaret's bill *will* be inside." He tore it open. "Nay, 'tis all in one writing. 'Gerard, my well-beloved son' (she never called me that before, that I mind), 'this letter brings thee heavy news from one would liever send thee joyful tidings. Know that Margaret Brandt died in these arms on Thursday se'nnight last.' (What does the doting old woman mean by that?) 'The last word on her lips was "Gerard:" she said, "Tell him I prayed for him at my last hour: and bid him pray for me." She died very comfortable, and I saw her laid in

the earth, for her father was useless, as you shall know. So no more at present from her that is with sorrowing heart thy loving friend and servant,

"Margaret Van Eyck."

"Ay, that is her signature sure enough. Now what d'ye think of that, dame?" cried Gerard, with a grating laugh. "There is a pretty letter to send to a poor fellow so far from home. But it is Reicht Heynes I blame for humoring the old woman and letting her do it; as for the old woman herself, she dotes, she has lost her head, she is fourscore. Oh, my heart, I'm choking. For all that she ought to be locked up, or her hands tied. Say this had come to a fool; say I was idiot enough to believe this; know ye what I should do? run to the top of the highest church tower in Rome and fling myself off it, cursing Heaven. Woman! woman! what are you doing?" And he seized her rudely by the shoulder. "What are ye weeping for?" he cried in a voice all unlike his own, and loud and hoarse as a raven. "Would ye scald me to death with your tears? She believes it. She believes it. Ah! ah! ah! ah! ah! ah!—Then there is no God."

The poor woman sighed and rocked herself. "And must I be the one to bring it thee all smiling and smirking? I could kill myself for't. Death spares none," she sobbed. "Death spares none."

Gerard staggered against the window-sill. "But He is master of death," he groaned. Or they have taught me a lie. I begin to fear there is no God, and the saints are but dead bones, and hell is master of the world. My pretty Margaret; my sweet, my loving Margaret! The best daughter, the truest lover! the pride of Holland! the darling of the world! It is a lie. Where is this caitiff Hans? I'll hunt him round the town. I'll cram his murdering falsehood down his throat."

And he seized his hat and ran furiously about the streets for hours.

Towards sunset he came back white as a ghost. He had not found Memling: but his poor mind had had time to realize the woman's simple words, that Death spares none.

He crept into the house bent, and feeble as an old man, and refused all food. Nor would he speak, but sat, white, with great staring eyes, muttering at intervals, "There is no God."

Alarmed both on his account and on her own (for he looked a desperate maniac), his landlady ran for her aunt.

The good dame came, and the two women, braver together, sat one on each side of him, and tried to soothe him with kind and consoling voices. But he heeded them no more than the chairs they sat on. Then the younger held a crucifix out before him, to aid her. "Maria, mother of heaven, comfort him," they sighed. But he sat glaring, deaf to all external sounds.

Presently, without any warning, he jumped up, struck the crucifix rudely out of his way with a curse, and made a headlong dash at the door. The poor women shrieked. But, ere he reached the door, something seemed to them to draw him up straight by his hair, and twirl him round like a top. He whirled twice round with arms extended; then fell like a dead log upon the floor, with blood trickling from his nostrils and ears.

CHAPTER XIII.

Gerard returned to consciousness and to despair.

On the second day he was raving with fever on the brain. On a table hard by lay his rich auburn hair, long as a woman's.

The deadlier symptoms succeeded one another rapidly.

On the fifth day his leech retired and gave him up.

On the sunset of that same day he fell into a deep sleep.

Some said he would wake only to die.

But an old gossip, whose opinion carried weight (she had been a professional nurse), declared that his youth might save him yet, could he sleep twelve hours.

On this his old landlady cleared the room and watched him alone. She vowed a wax candle to the Virgin for every hour he should sleep.

He slept twelve hours.

The good soul rejoiced, and thanked the Virgin on her knees.

He slept twenty-four hours.

His kind nurse began to doubt. At the thirtieth hour she sent for the woman of art. "Thirty hours! shall we wake him?"

The other inspected him closely for some time.

"His breath is even, his hand moist. I know there be learned leeches would wake him, to look at his tongue, and be none the wiser; but we that be women should have the sense to let bon nature alone. When did sleep ever harm the racked brain or the torn heart?"

When he had been forty-eight hours asleep, it got

wind, and they had much ado to keep the curious out. But they admitted only Fra Colonna and his friend the gigantic Fra Jerome.

These two relieved the women, and sat silent; the former eying his young friend with tears in his eyes; the latter with beads in his hand looked as calmly on him, as he had on the sea when Gerard and he encountered it hand to hand.

At last, I think it was about the sixtieth hour of this strange sleep, the landlady touched Fra Colonna with her elbow. He looked. Gerard had opened his eyes as gently as if he had been but dozing.

He stared.

He drew himself up a little in bed.

He put his hand to his head, and found his hair was gone.

He noticed his friend Colonna, and smiled with pleasure. But in the middle of smiling his face stopped, and was convulsed in a moment with anguish unspeakable, and he uttered a loud cry, and turned his face to the wall.

His good landlady wept at this. She had known what it is to awake bereaved.

Fra Jerome recited canticles, and prayers from his breviary.

Gerard rolled himself in the bed-clothes.

Fra Colonna went to him, and, whimpering, reminded him that all was not lost. The divine Muses were immortal. He must transfer his affection to them; they would never betray him nor fail him like creatures of clay. The good, simple father then hurried away; for he was overcome by his emotion.

Fra Jerome remained behind. "Young man," said he, "the Muses exist but in the brains of pagans and visionaries. The Church alone gives repose to the heart on

earth, and happiness to the soul hereafter. Hath earth deceived thee, hath passion broken thy heart after tearing it, the Church opens her arms: consecrate thy gifts to her! The Church is peace of mind."

He spoke these words solemnly at the door, and was gone as soon as they were uttered.

"The Church!" cried Gerard, rising furiously and shaking his fist after the friar. "Malediction on the Church! But for the Church I should not lie broken here, and she lie cold, cold, cold, in Holland. O my Margaret! O my darling! my darling! And I must run from thee the few months thou hadst to live. Cruel! cruel! The monsters, they let her die. Death comes not without some signs. These the blind, selfish wretches saw not, or recked not; but I had seen them, I that love her. Oh, had I been there, I had saved her, I had saved her! Idiot! idiot! to leave her for a moment."

He wept bitterly a long time.

Then, suddenly bursting into rage again, he cried, vehemently, "The Church! for whose sake I was driven from her; my malison be on the Church! and the hypocrites that name it to my broken heart. Accursed be the world! Ghysbrecht lives; Margaret dies. Thieves, murderers, harlots, live forever. Only angels die. Curse life! Curse death! and whosoever made them what they are!"

The friar did not hear these mad and wicked words; but only the yell of rage with which they were flung after him.

It was as well. For, if he had heard them, he would have had his late shipmate burned in the forum with as little hesitation as he would have roasted a kid.

His old landlady, who had accompanied Fra Colonna down the stair, heard the raised voice, and returned in some anxiety.

She found Gerard putting on his clothes, and crying.

She remonstrated.

"What avails my lying here?" said he, gloomily. "Can I find here that which I seek?"

"Saints preserve us! Is he distraught again? What seek ye?"

"Oblivion."

"Oblivion, my little heart? Oh, but y'are young to talk so."

"Young or old, what else have I to live for?"

He put on his best clothes.

The good dame remonstrated. "My pretty Gerard, know that it is Tuesday, not Sunday."

"Oh, Tuesday is it? I thought it had been Saturday."

"Nay, thou hast slept long. Thou never wearest thy brave clothes on working days. Consider."

"What I did, when she lived, I did. Now I shall do whatever erst I did not. The past is the past. There lies my hair, and with it my way of life. I have served one master as well as I could. You see my reward. Now I'll serve another, and give him a fair trial, too."

"Alas!" sighed the woman, turning pale, "what mean these dark words? and what new master is this whose service thou wouldst try?"

"Satan."

And with this horrible declaration on his lips the miserable creature walked out with his cap and feather set jauntily on one side, and feeble limbs, and a sinister face pale as ashes, and all drawn down as if by age.

CHAPTER XIV.

A DARK cloud fell on a noble mind.

His pure and unrivalled love for Margaret had been his polar star. It was quenched, and he drifted on the gloomy sea of no hope.

Nor was he a prey to despair alone, but to exasperation at all his self-denial, fortitude, perils, virtue, wasted, and worse than wasted; for it kept burning and stinging him, that, had he stayed lazily, selfishly, at home, he should have saved his Margaret's life.

These two poisons, raging together in his young blood, maddened and demoralized him. He rushed fiercely into pleasure. And in those days, even more than now, pleasure was vice.

Wine, women, gambling, whatever could procure him an hour's excitement and a moment's oblivion, — he plunged into these things, as men tired of life have rushed among the enemy's bullets.

The large sums he had put by for Margaret gave him ample means for debauchery, and he was soon the leader of those loose companions he had hitherto kept at a distance.

His heart deteriorated along with his morals.

He sulked with his old landlady for thrusting gentle advice and warning on him; and finally removed to another part of the town, to be clear of remonstrance and reminiscences. When he had carried this game on some time, his hand became less steady, and he could no longer write to satisfy himself. Moreover, his patience declined as the habits of pleasure grew on him. So he gave up that art, and took likenesses in colors.

But this he neglected whenever the idle rakes, his companions, came for him.

And so he dived in foul waters, seeking that sorry oyster-shell, oblivion.

It is not my business to paint at full length the scenes of coarse vice, in which this unhappy young man now played a part. But it *is* my business to impress the broad truth that he was a rake, a debauchee, and a drunkard, and one of the wildest, loosest, and wickedest young men in Rome.

They are no lovers of truth, nor of mankind, who conceal or slur the wickedness of the good, and so by their want of candor rob despondent sinners of hope.

Enough, the man was not born to do things by halves. And he was not vicious by halves.

His humble female friends often gossiped about him. His old landlady told Teresa he was going to the bad, and prayed her to try and find out where he was.

Teresa told her husband Lodovico his sad story, and bade him look about and see if he could discover the young man's present abode. "Shouldst remember his face, Lodovico *mio?*"

"Teresa, a man in my way of life never forgets a face, least of all a benefactor's. But thou knowest I seldom go abroad by daylight."

Teresa sighed. "And how long is it to be so, Lodovico?"

"Till some cavalier passes his sword through me. They will not let a poor fellow like me take to any honest trade."

Pietro Vanucci was one of those who bear prosperity worse than adversity.

Having been ignominiously ejected for late hours by their old landlady, and meeting Gerard in the street, he

greeted him warmly, and soon after took up his quarters in the same house.

He brought with him a lad called Andrea, who ground his colors, and was his pupil, and also his model, being a youth of rare beauty, and as sharp as a needle.

Pietro had not quite forgotten old times, and professed a warm friendship for Gerard.

Gerard, in whom all warmth of sentiment seemed extinct, submitted coldly to the other's friendship.

And a fine acquaintance it was. This Pietro was not only a libertine, but half a misanthrope, and an open infidel.

And so they ran in couples, with mighty little in common. Oh, rare phenomenon!

One day, when Gerard had undermined his health, and taken the bloom off his beauty, and run through most of his money, Vanucci got up a gay party to mount the Tiber in a boat drawn by buffaloes. Lorenzo de' Medici had imported these creatures into Florence about three years before. But they were new in Rome, and nothing would content this beggar on horseback, Vanucci, but being drawn by the brutes up the Tiber.

Each libertine was to bring a lady; and she must be handsome, or he be fined. But the one that should contribute the loveliest was to be crowned with laurel, and voted a public benefactor. Such was their reading of *"Vir bonus est quis?"* They got a splendid galley, and twelve buffaloes. And all the libertines and their female accomplices assembled by degrees at the place of embarkation. But no Gerard.

They waited for him some time, at first patiently, then impatiently.

Vanucci excused him. "I heard him say he had forgotten to provide himself with a fardingale. Comrades, the good lad is hunting for a beauty fit to take rank

among these peerless dames. Consider the difficulty, ladies, and be patient!"

At last Gerard was seen at some distance with a female in his hand.

"She is long enough," said one of her sex, criticising her from afar.

"Gemini! what steps she takes," said another. "Oh! it is wise to hurry into good company," was Pietro's excuse.

But when the pair came up, satire was choked.

Gerard's companion was a peerless beauty. She extinguished the boat-load as stars the rising sun. Tall, but not too tall, and straight as a dart, yet supple as a young panther. Her face a perfect oval, her forehead white, her cheeks a rich olive with the eloquent blood mantling below; and her glorious eyes fringed with long, thick, silken eyelashes, that seemed made to sweep up sensitive hearts by the half-dozen. Saucy red lips, and teeth of the whitest ivory.

The women were visibly depressed by this wretched sight; the men in ecstasies; they received her with loud shouts and waving of caps, and one enthusiast even went down on his knees upon the boat's gunwale, and hailed her of origin divine. But his *chère amie* pulling his hair for it — and the goddess giving him a little kick — contemporaneously, he lay supine; and the peerless creature frisked over his body without deigning him a look, and took her seat at the prow. Pietro Vanucci sat in a sort of collapse, glaring at her, and gaping with his mouth open like a dying codfish.

The drover spoke to the buffaloes, the ropes tightened, and they moved up stream.

"What think ye of this new beef, mesdames?"

"We ne'er saw monsters so vilely ill-favored, with their nasty horns that make one afeard, and their foul

nostrils cast up into the air. Holes be they; not nostrils."

"Signorina, the beeves are a present from Florence the beautiful. Would ye look a gift beef i' the nose?"

"They are so dull," objected a lively lady. "I went up Tiber twice as fast last time with but five mules and an ass."

"Nay, that is soon mended," cried a gallant, and jumping ashore he drew his sword, and, despite the remonstrances of the drivers, went down the dozen buffaloes goading them.

They snorted and whisked their tails, and went no faster, at which the boat-load laughed loud and long; finally he goaded a patriarch bull, who turned instantly on the sword, sent his long horns clean through the spark, and with a furious jerk of his prodigious neck sent him flying over his head into the air. He described a bold parabola and fell sitting, and unconsciously waving his glittering blade, into the yellow Tiber. The laughing ladies screamed and wrung their hands, all but Gerard's fair. She uttered something very like an oath, and seizing the helm steered the boat out, and the gallant came up sputtering, griped the gunwale, and was drawn in dripping.

He glared round him confusedly. "I understand not that," said he, a little peevishly; puzzled, and, therefore, it would seem, discontented. At which, finding he was by some strange accident not slain, his doublet being perforated, instead of his body, they began to laugh again louder than ever.

"What are ye cackling at?" remonstrated the spark. "I desire to know how 'tis that one moment a gentleman is out yonder a-pricking of African beef, and the next moment" —

Gerard's lady. Disporting in his native stream.

"Tell him not, a soul of ye!" cried Vanucci. "Let him find out's own riddle."

"Confound ye all. I might puzzle my brains till doomsday, I should ne'er find it out. Also, where is my sword?"

Gerard's lady. Ask Tiber! Your best way, signor, will be to do it over again; and, in a word, keep pricking of Afric's beef, till your mind receives light. So shall you comprehend the matter by degrees, as lawyers mount heaven, and buffaloes Tiber.

Here a chevalier remarked that the last speaker transcended the sons of Adam as much in wit as she did the daughters of Eve in beauty.

At which, and indeed at all their compliments, the conduct of Pietro Vanucci was peculiar. That signor had left off staring and gaping bewildered, and now sat coiled up snake-like, on a bench, his mouth muffled, and two bright eyes fixed on the lady, and twinkling and scintillating most comically.

He did not appear to interest or amuse her in return. Her glorious eyes and eyelashes swept him calmly at times, but scarce distinguished him from the benches and things.

Presently the unanimity of the party suffered a momentary check.

Mortified by the attention the cavaliers paid to Gerard's companion, the ladies began to pick her to pieces *sotto voce*, and audibly.

The lovely girl then showed that, if rich in beauty, she was poor in feminine tact. Instead of revenging herself like a true woman through the men, she permitted herself to overhear, and openly retaliate on her detractors.

"There is not one of you that wears Nature's colors," said she. "Look here!" and she pointed rudely in one's

face. "This is the beauty that is to be bought in every shop. Here is *cerussa*, here is *stibium*, and here *purpurissum*. Oh, I know the articles: bless you! I use them every day, — but not on my face, no, thank you."

Here Vanucci's eyes twinkled themselves nearly out of sight.

"Why, your lips are colored, and the very veins in your forehead: not a charm but would come off with a wet towel. And look at your great coarse black hair like a horse's tail, drugged and stained to look like tow. And then your bodies are as false as your heads and your cheeks, and your hearts I trow. Look at your padded bosoms, and your wooden-heeled chopines to raise your little stunted limbs up and deceive the world. Skinny dwarfs ye are, cushioned and stiltified into great fat giants. Aha, mesdames, well is it said of you, *grande — di legni: grosse — di straci: rosse — di bettito: bianche — di calcina.*"

This drew out a rejoinder. "Avaunt, vulgar toad, telling the men everything. Your coarse, ruddy cheeks are your own, and your little handful of African hair. But who is padded more? Why, you are shaped like a fire-shovel."

"Ye lie, malapert."

"Oh the well-educated young person! Where didst pick her up, Ser Gerard?"

"Hold thy peace, Marcia," said Gerard, awakened by the raised trebles from a gloomy reverie. "Be not so insolent! The grave shall close over thy beauty, as it hath over fairer than thee."

"They began," said Marcia petulantly.

"Then be thou the first to leave off."

"At thy request, my friend." She then whispered Gerard, "It was only to make you laugh: you are distraught, you are sad. Judge whether I care for the

quips of these little fools, or the admiration of these big fools. Dear Signor Gerard, would I were what they take me for? You should not be so sad." Gerard sighed deeply, and shook his head, but, touched by the earnest young tones, caressed the jet-black locks, much as one strokes the head of an affectionate dog.

At this moment a galley drifting slowly down stream got entangled for an instant in their ropes; for, the river turning suddenly, they had shot out into the stream, and this galley came between them and the bank. In it a lady of great beauty was seated under a canopy, with gallants and dependents standing behind her.

Gerard looked up at the interruption. It was the Princess Clælia.

He colored, and withdrew his hand from Marcia's head.

Marcia was all admiration. "Aha! ladies," said she, "here is a rival an ye will. Those cheeks were colored by Nature — like mine."

"Peace, child, peace!" said Gerard. "Make not too free with the great."

"Why, she heard me not. Oh, Ser Gerard, what a lovely creature!"

Two of the females had been for some time past putting their heads together and casting glances at Marcia.

One of them now addressed her.

"Signorina, do you love almonds?"

The speaker had a lapful of them.

"Yes, I love them, when I can get them," said Marcia pettishly, and eying the fruit with ill-concealed desire; "but yours is not the hand to give me any, I trow."

"You are much mistook," said the other. "Here, catch!" and suddenly threw a double handful into Marcia's lap.

Marcia brought her knees together by an irresistible instinct.

"Aha! you are caught, my lad," cried she of the nuts. "'Tis a man, or a boy. A woman still parteth her knees to catch the nuts the surer in her apron, but a man closeth his for fear they should fall between his hose. Confess, now, didst never wear fardingale ere to-day."

"Give me another handful, sweetheart, and I'll tell thee."

"There! I said he was too handsome for a woman."

"Ser Gerard, they have found me out," observed the Epicæne, calmly cracking an almond.

The libertines vowed it was impossible, and all glared at the goddess like a battery. But Vanucci struck in, and reminded the gaping gazers of a recent controversy, in which they had, with an unanimity not often found among dunces, laughed Gerard and him to scorn for saying that men were as beautiful as women in a true artist's eye.

"Where are ye now? This is my boy Andrea. And you have all been down on your knees to him. Ha! ha! But oh, my little ladies, when he lectured you and flung your *stibium*, your *cerussa*, and your *purpurissum* back in your faces, 'tis then I was like to burst: a grinds my colors. Ha! ha! he! he! he! ho!"

"The little impostor! Duck him!"

"What for, signors?" cried Andrea in dismay, and lost his rich carnation.

But the females collected round him, and vowed nobody should harm a hair of his head.

"The dear child! How well his pretty little saucy ways become him."

"Oh, what eyes, and teeth!"

"And what eyebrows and hair!"

"And what lashes!"

"And what a nose!"

"The sweetest little ear in the world!"

"And what health! Touch but his cheek with a pin, the blood should squirt."

"Who would be so cruel?"

"He is a rosebud washed in dew."

And they revenged themselves for their beaux' admiration of her by lavishing all their tenderness on him.

But one there was who was still among these butterflies, but no longer of them.

The sight of the Princess Clælia had torn open his wound.

Scarce three months ago he had declined the love of that peerless creature, — a love illicit and insane, but at least refined. How much lower had he fallen now!

How happy he must have been when the blandishments of Clælia, that might have melted an anchorite, could not tempt him from the path of loyalty!

Now what was he? He had blushed at her seeing him in such company. Yet it was his daily company.

He hung over the boat in moody silence.

And from that hour another phase of his misery began, and grew upon him.

Some wretched fools try to drown care in drink.

The fumes of intoxication vanish: the inevitable care remains, and must be faced at last, — with an aching head, a disordered stomach, and spirits artificially depressed.

Gerard's conduct had been of a piece with these maniacs'. To survive his terrible blow he needed all his forces: his virtue, his health, his habits of labor, and the calm sleep that is labor's satellite; above all, his piety.

Yet all these balms to wounded hearts he flung away, and trusted to moral intoxication.

Its brief fumes fled: the bereaved heart lay still heavy as lead within his bosom, but now the dark vulture Remorse sat upon it rending it.

Broken health; means wasted; innocence fled; Margaret parted from him by another gulf wider than the grave.

The hot fit of despair passed away.

The cold fit of despair came on.

Then this miserable young man spurned his gay companions, and all the world.

He wandered alone. He drank wine alone to stupefy himself, and paralyze a moment the dark foes to man that preyed upon his soul. He wandered alone amidst the temples of old Rome, and lay stony-eyed, woe-begone, among their ruins, worse wrecked than they.

Last of all came the climax to which solitude, that gloomy yet fascinating foe of minds diseased, pushes the hopeless.

He wandered alone at night by dark streams, and eyed them, and eyed them, with decreasing repugnance. There glided peace; perhaps annihilation.

What else was left him?

These dark spells have been broken by kind words, by loving and cheerful voices.

The humblest friend the afflicted one possesses may speak, or look, or smile, a sunbeam between him and that worst madness. Gerard now brooded.

Where was Teresa? Where his hearty, kind old landlady?

They would see with their homely but swift intelligence; they would see and save.

No; they knew not where he was, or whither he was gliding.

And is there no mortal eye upon the poor wretch, and the dark road he is going?

Yes: one eye there is upon him, watching his every movement, following him abroad, tracking him home.

And that eye is the eye of an enemy.

An enemy to the death.

CHAPTER XV.

In an apartment richly furnished, the floor covered with striped and spotted skins of animals, a lady sat with her arms extended before her, and her hands half clenched. The agitation of her face corresponded with this attitude: she was pale and red by turns, and her foot restless.

Presently the curtain was drawn by a domestic.

The lady's brow flushed.

The maid said, in an awe-struck whisper, "Altezza, the man is here."

The lady bade her admit him, and snatched up a little black mask and put it on; and in a moment her color was gone, and the contrast between her black mask and her marble cheeks was strange and fearful.

A man entered bowing and scraping. It was such a figure as crowds seem made of: short hair, roundish head, plain but decent clothes: features neither comely nor forbidding. Nothing to remark in him but a singularly restless eye.

After a profusion of bows he stood opposite the lady, and awaited her pleasure.

"They have told you for what you are wanted?"

"Yes, signora."

"Did those who spoke to you agree as to what you are to receive?

"Yes, signora. 'Tis the full price, and purchases the greater vendetta, unless of your benevolence you choose to content yourself with the lesser."

"I understand you not," said the lady.

"Ah! this is the signora's first. The lesser vendetta, lady, is the death of the body only. We watch our man come out of a church, or take him in an innocent hour, and so deal with him. In the greater vendetta we watch him, and catch him hot from some unrepented sin, and so slay his soul as well as his body. But this vendetta is not so run upon now as it was a few years ago."

"Man, silence me his tongue, and let his treasonable heart beat no more. But his soul I have no feud with."

"So be it, signora. He who spoke to me knew not the man, nor his name, nor his abode. From whom shall I learn these?"

"From myself."

At this the man, with the first symptoms of anxiety he had shown, entreated her to be cautious and particular in this part of the business.

"Fear me not," said she. "Listen. It is a young man, tall of stature, and auburn hair, and dark-blue eyes, and an honest face, would deceive a saint. He lives in Via Claudia, at the corner house: the glover's. In that house there lodge but three males: he, and a painter short of stature and dark visaged, and a young, slim boy. He that hath betrayed me is a stranger, fair, and taller than thou art."

The bravo listened with all his ears. "It is enough," said he. "Stay, signora; haunteth he any secret place where I may deal with him?"

"My spy doth report me, he hath of late frequented the banks of Tiber after dusk; doubtless to meet his light o' love, who calls me her rival; even there slay him! and let my rival come and find him; the smooth, heartless, insolent traitor."

"Be calm, signora. He will betray no more ladies."

"I know not that. He weareth a sword, and can use it. He is young and resolute."

"Neither will avail him."

"Are ye so sure of your hand? What are your weapons?"

The bravo showed her a steel gauntlet. "We strike with such force, we need must guard our hand. This is our mallet." He then undid his doublet, and gave her a glimpse of a coat of mail beneath, and finally laid his glittering stiletto on the table with a flourish.

The lady shuddered at first, but presently took it up in her white hand and tried its point against her finger.

"Beware, madam," said the bravo.

"What, is it poisoned?"

"Saints forbid! We steal no lives. We take them with steel point, not drugs. But 'tis newly ground, and I feared for the signora's white skin."

"His skin is as white as mine," said she, with a sudden gleam of pity. It lasted but a moment. "But his heart is as black as soot. Say, do I not well to remove a traitor that slanders me?"

"The signora will settle that with her confessor. I am but a tool in noble hands; like my stiletto."

The princess appeared not to hear the speaker. "Oh, how I could have loved him: to the death; as now I hate him. Fool! he will learn to trifle with princes; to spurn them and fawn on them, and prefer the scum of the town to them, and make them a by-word." She looked up: "Why loiter'st thou here? haste thee, revenge me."

"It is customary to pay half the price beforehand, signora."

"Ah, I forgot; thy revenge is bought. Here is more than half," and she pushed a bag across the table to him. "When the blow is struck, come for the rest."

"You will soon see me again, signora."

And he retired bowing and scraping.

The princess, burning with jealousy, mortified pride, and dread of exposure (for till she knew Gerard no public stain had fallen on her), sat where he left her, masked, with her arms straight out before her, and the nails of her clenched hand nipping the table.

So sat the fabled sphinx; so sits a tigress.

Yet there crept a chill upon her, now that the assassin was gone. And moody misgivings heaved within her, precursors of vain remorse. Gerard and Margaret were before their age. *This* was your true mediæval. Proud, amorous, vindictive, generous, foolish, cunning, impulsive, unprincipled; and ignorant as dirt.

Power is the curse of such a creature.

Forced to do her own crimes, the weakness of her nerves would have balanced the violence of her passions, and her bark been worse than her bite. But power gives a feeble, furious woman, male instruments. And the effect is as terrible as the combination is unnatural.

In this instance it whetted an assassin's dagger for a poor forlorn wretch just meditating suicide.

CHAPTER XVI.

It happened, two days after the scene I have endeavored to describe, that Gerard, wandering through one of the meanest streets in Rome, was overtaken by a thunderstorm, and entered a low hostelry. He called for wine, and, the rain continuing, soon drank himself into a half-stupid condition, and dozed with his head on his hands, and his hands upon the table.

In course of time the room began to fill, and the noise of the rude guests to wake him.

Then it was he became conscious of two figures near him conversing in a low voice.

One was a pardoner. The other by his dress, clean but modest, might have passed for a decent tradesman; but the way he had slouched his hat over his brows so as to hide all his face except his beard, showed he was one of those who shun the eye of honest men, and of the law. The pair were driving a bargain in the sin market. And by an arrangement not uncommon at that date, the crime to be forgiven was yet to be committed — under the celestial contract.

He of the slouched hat was complaining of the price pardons had reached. "If they go up any higher we poor fellows shall be shut out of heaven altogether."

The pardoner denied the charge flatly. "Indulgences were never cheaper to good husbandmen."

The other inquired, "Who were they?"

"Why, such as sin by the market like reasonable creatures. But if you will be so perverse as go and pick out a crime the Pope hath set his face against, blame yourself, not me."

Then to prove that crime of one sort or another was within the means of all but the very scum of society, he read out the scale from a written parchment.

It was a curious list: but not one that could be printed in this book. And to mutilate it would be to misrepresent it. It is to be found in any great library. Suffice it to say that murder of a layman was much cheaper than many crimes my lay readers would deem light by comparison.

This told; and, by a little trifling concession on each side, the bargain was closed, the money handed over, and the aspirant to heaven's favor forgiven beforehand for removing one layman. The price for disposing of a clerk bore no proportion.

The word "assassination" was never once uttered by either merchant.

All this buzzed in Gerard's ear. But he never lifted his head from the table; only listened stupidly.

However, when the parties rose and separated, he half raised his head, and eyed with a scowl the retiring figure of the purchaser.

"If Margaret was alive," muttered he, "I'd take thee by the throat and throttle thee, thou cowardly stabber. But she is dead! dead! dead. Die all the world; 'tis not to me; so that I die among the first."

When he got home there was a man in a slouched hat walking briskly to and fro on the opposite side of the way.

"Why, there is that cur again," thought Gerard.

But in his state of mind, the circumstance made no impression whatever on him.

CHAPTER XVII.

Two nights after this Pietro Vanucci and Andrea sat waiting supper for Gerard.

The former grew peevish. It was past nine o'clock. At last he sent Andrea to Gerard's room on the desperate chance of his having come in unobserved. Andrea shrugged his shoulders and went.

He returned without Gerard, but with a slip of paper. Andrea could not read, as scholars in his day, and charity boys in ours, understand the art; but he had a quick eye, and had learned how the words Pietro Vanucci looked on paper.

"That is for you, I trow," said he, proud of his intelligence.

Pietro snatched it, and read it to Andrea, with his satirical comments.

"'Dear Pietro, dear Andrea, life is too great a burden.'

"*So 'tis, my lad; but that is no reason for being abroad at supper-time. Supper is not a burden.*

"'Wear my habits!'

"*Said the poplar to the juniper bush.*

"'And thou, Andrea, mine amethyst ring; and me in both your hearts a month or two.'

"*Why, Andrea?*"

"'For my body, ere this ye read, it will lie in Tiber. Trouble not to look for it. 'Tis not worth the pains. Oh, unhappy day that it was born; oh, happy night that rids me of it.

"'Adieu! adieu!

"'The broken-hearted GERARD.'

"Here is a sorry jest of the peevish rogue," said Pietro. But his pale cheek and chattering teeth belied his words. Andrea filled the house with his cries.

"O miserable day! O calamity of calamities! Gerard, my friend, my sweet patron! Help! help! He is killing himself! Oh, good people, help me save him!" And after alarming all the house he ran into the street, bareheaded, imploring all good Christians to help him save his friend.

A number of persons soon collected.

But poor Andrea could not animate their sluggishness. Go down to the river? No. It was not their business. What part of the river? It was a wild-goose chase.

It was not lucky to go down to the river after sunset. Too many ghosts walked those banks all night.

A lackey, however, who had been standing some time opposite the house, said he would go with Andrea; and this turned three or four of the younger ones.

The little band took the way to the river.

The lackey questioned Andrea.

Andrea, sobbing, told him about the letter, and Gerard's moody ways of late.

That lackey was a spy of the Princess Clælia.

Their Italian tongues went fast till they neared the Tiber.

But the moment they felt the air from the river, and the smell of the stream in the calm spring night, they were dead silent.

The moon shone calm and clear in a cloudless sky. Their feet sounded loud and ominous. Their tongues were hushed.

Presently hurrying round a corner they met a man. He stopped irresolute at sight of them.

The man was bareheaded, and his dripping hair glis-

tened in the moonlight; and at the next step they saw his clothes were drenched with water.

"Here he is," cried one of the young men, unacquainted with Gerard's face and figure.

The stranger turned instantly and fled.

They ran after him might and main, Andrea leading, and the princess's lackey next.

Andrea gained on him; but in a moment he twisted up a narrow alley. Andrea shot by, unable to check himself; and the pursuers soon found themselves in a labyrinth in which it was vain to pursue a quick-footed fugitive who knew every inch of it, and could now only be followed by the ear.

They returned to their companions, and found them standing on the spot where the man had stood, and utterly confounded. For Pietro had assured them that the fugitive had neither the features nor the stature of Gerard.

"Are ye verily sure?" said they. "He had been in the river. Why, in the saints' names, fled he at our approach?"

Then said Vanucci, "Friends, methinks this has nought to do with him we seek. What shall we do, Andrea?"

Here the lackey put in his word. "Let us track him to the water's side, to make sure. See, he hath come dripping all the way."

This advice was approved, and with very little difficulty they tracked the man's course.

But soon they encountered a new enigma.

They had gone scarcely fifty yards ere the drops turned away from the river, and took them to the gate of a large gloomy building. It was a monastery.

They stood irresolute before it, and gazed at the dark pile. It seemed to them to hide some horrible mystery.

But presently Andrea gave a shout. "Here be the drops again," cried he. "And this road leadeth to the river."

They resumed the chase; and soon it became clear the drops were now leading them home. The track became wetter and wetter, and took them to the Tiber's edge. And there on the bank a bucketful appeared to have been discharged from the stream.

At first they shouted, and thought they had made a discovery; but reflection showed them it amounted to nothing. Certainly a man had been in the water, and had got out of it in safety: but that man was not Gerard. One said he knew a fisherman hard by that had nets and drags. They found the fisher, and paid him liberally to sink nets in the river below the place, and to drag it above and below; and promised him gold should he find the body. Then they ran vainly up and down the river, which flowed so calm and voiceless, holding this and a thousand more strange secrets. Suddenly Andrea, with a cry of hope, ran back to the house.

He returned in less than half an hour.

"No," he groaned, and wrung his hands.

"What is the hour?" asked the lackey.

"Four hours past midnight."

"My pretty lad," said the lackey solemnly, "say a mass for thy friend's soul: for he is not among living men."

The morning broke. Worn out with fatigue, Andrea and Pietro went home, heart-sick.

The days rolled on, mute as the Tiber as to Gerard's fate.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It would indeed have been strange if with such barren data as they possessed, those men could have read the handwriting on the river's bank.

For there on that spot an event had just occurred, which, take it altogether, was perhaps without a parallel in the history of mankind, and may remain so to the end of time.

But it shall be told in a very few words, partly by me, and partly by an actor in the scene.

Gerard, then, after writing this brief adieu to Pietro and Andrea, had stolen down to the river at nightfall.

He had taken his measures with a dogged resolution not uncommon in those who are bent on self-destruction. He filled his pockets with all the silver and copper he possessed, that he might sink the surer; and, so provided, hurried to a part of the stream that he had seen was little frequented.

There are some, especially women, who look about to make sure there is somebody at hand.

But this resolute wretch looked about him to make sure there was nobody.

And, to his annoyance, he observed a single figure leaning against the corner of an alley. So he affected to stroll carelessly away; but returned to the spot.

Lo! the same figure emerged from a side street and loitered about.

"Can he be watching me? Can he know what I am here for?" thought Gerard. "Impossible!"

He went briskly off, walked along a street or two, made a detour and came back.

The man had vanished. But, lo! on Gerard looking all round, to make sure, there he was a few yards behind, apparently fastening his shoe.

Gerard saw he was watched, and at this moment observed in the moonlight a steel gauntlet in his sentinel's hand.

Then he knew it was an assassin.

Strange to say, it never occurred to him that his was the life aimed at. To be sure, he was not aware he had an enemy in the world.

He turned and walked up to the bravo. "My good friend," said he eagerly, "sell me thine arm! a single stroke! See, here is all I have;" and he forced his money into the bravo's hands. "Oh, prithee, prithee! do one good deed, and rid me of my hateful life!" and even while speaking he undid his doublet, and bared his bosom.

The man stared in his face.

"Why do ye hesitate?" shrieked Gerard. "Have ye no bowels? Is it so much pains to lift your arm and fall it? Is it because I am poor, and can't give ye gold? Useless wretch, canst only strike a man behind; not look one in the face. There, then, do but turn thy head and hold thy tongue!"

And with a snarl of contempt he ran from him, and flung himself into the water.

"Margaret!"

At the heavy plunge of his body in the stream, the bravo seemed to recover from a stupor. He ran to the bank, and with a strange cry the assassin plunged in after the self-destroyer.

What followed will be related by the assassin.

CHAPTER XIX.

A WOMAN has her own troubles, as a man has his.

And we male writers seldom do more than indicate the griefs of the other sex. The intelligence of the female reader must come to our aid, and fill up our cold outlines. So have I indicated, rather than described, what Margaret Brandt went through up to that eventful day, when she entered Eli's house an enemy, read her sweetheart's letter, and remained a friend.

And now a woman's greatest trial drew near, and Gerard far away.

She availed herself but little of Eli's sudden favor; for this reserve she had always a plausible reason ready; and never hinted at the true one, which was this: there were two men in that house at sight of whom she shuddered with instinctive antipathy and dread. She had read wickedness and hatred in their faces, and mysterious signals of secret intelligence. She preferred to receive Catherine and her daughter at home. The former went to see her every day, and was wrapped up in the expected event.

Catherine was one of those females whose office is to multiply, and rear the multiplied: who, when at last they consent to leave off pelting one out of every room in the house with babies, hover about the fair scourges that are still in full swing, and do so cluck, they seem to multiply by proxy. It was in this spirit she entreated Eli to let her stay at Rotterdam while he went back to Tergou.

"The poor lass hath not a soul about her, that knows

anything about anything. What avail a pair o' soldiers? Why, that sort o' cattle should be putten out o' doors the first, at such an a time."

Need I say that this was a great comfort to Margaret?

Poor soul, she was full of anxiety as the time drew near.

She should die; and Gerard away.

But things balance themselves. Her poverty, and her father's helplessness, which had cost her such a struggle, stood her in good stead now.

Adversity's iron hand had forced her to battle the lassitude that overpowers the rich of her sex, and to be forever on her feet, working. She kept this up to the last by Catherine's advice.

And so it was, that one fine evening, just at sunset, she lay weak as water, but safe; with a little face by her side, and the heaven of maternity opening on her.

"Why dost weep, sweetheart? All of a sudden?"

"He is not here to see it."

"Ah, well, lass, he will be here ere 'tis weaned. Meantime, God hath been as good to thee as to e'er a woman born; and do but bethink thee it might have been a girl: didn't my very own Kate threaten me with one! and here we have got the bonniest boy in Holland, and a rare heavy one, the saints be praised for't."

"Ay, mother, I am but a sorry, ungrateful wretch to weep. If only Gerard were here to see it. 'Tis strange; I bore him well enow to be away from me in my sorrow; but oh, it doth seem so hard he should not share my joy. Prithee, prithee, come to me, Gerard! dear, dear Gerard!" And she stretched out her feeble arms.

Catherine bustled about, but avoided Margaret's eyes; for she could not restrain her own tears at hearing her own absent child thus earnestly addressed.

Presently, turning round, she found Margaret look-

ing at her with a singular expression. "Heard you nought?"

"No, my lamb. What?"

"I did cry on Gerard, but now."

"Ay, ay, sure I heard that."

"Well, he answered me."

"Tush, girl: say not that."

"Mother, as sure as I lie here, with his boy by my side, his voice came back to me, 'Margaret!' So. Yet methought 'twas not his *happy* voice. But that might be the distance. All voices go off sad like at a distance. Why art not happy, sweetheart? and I so happy this night? Mother, I seem never to have felt a pain or known a care." And her sweet eyes turned and gloated on the little face in silence.

That very night Gerard flung himself into the Tiber. And, that very hour she heard him speak her name, he cried aloud in death's jaws and despair's:

"Margaret!"

Account for it, those who can. I cannot.

CHAPTER XX.

In the guest chamber of a Dominican convent lay a single stranger, exhausted by successive and violent fits of nausea, which had at last subsided, leaving him almost as weak as Margaret lay that night in Holland.

A huge wood fire burned on the hearth, and beside it hung the patient's clothes.

A gigantic friar sat by his bedside reading pious collects aloud from his breviary.

The patient at times eyed him, and seemed to listen; at others closed his eyes and moaned.

The monk kneeled down with his face touching the ground, and prayed for him: then rose and bade him farewell. "Day breaks," said he, "I must prepare for matins."

"Good father Jerome, before you go, how came I hither?"

"By the hand of heaven. You flung away God's gift. He bestowed it on you again. Think on it! Hast tried the world and found its gall. Now try the Church. The Church is peace. *Pax vobiscum.*"

He was gone. Gerard lay back, meditating and wondering, till weak and wearied he fell into a doze.

When he awoke again he found a new nurse seated beside him. It was a layman, with an eye as small and restless as Friar Jerome's was calm and majestic.

The man inquired earnestly how he felt.

"Very, very weak. Where have I seen you before, messer?"

"None the worse for my gauntlet?" inquired the

other, with considerable anxiety; "I was fain to strike you withal, or both you and I should be at the bottom of Tiber."

Gerard stared at him. "What, 'twas you saved me? How?"

"Well, signor, I was by the banks of Tiber on — on — an errand, no matter what. You came to me, and begged hard for a dagger stroke. But ere I could oblige you, ay, even as you spoke to me, I knew you for the signor that saved my wife and child upon the sea."

"It *is* Teresa's husband. And an assassin!"

"At your service. Well, Ser Gerard, the next thing was, you flung yourself into Tiber, and bade me hold aloof."

"I remember that."

"Had it been any but you, believe me I had obeyed you, and not wagged a finger. Men are my foes. They may all hang on one rope, or drown in one river, for me. But when thou, sinking in Tiber, didst cry 'Margaret!'"

"Ah!"

"My heart it cried 'Teresa!' How could I go home and look her in the face, did I let thee die, and by the very death thou savedst her from? So in I went: and luckily for us both I swim like a duck. You, seeing me near, and being bent on destruction, tried to grip me, and so end us both. But I swam round thee, and (receive my excuses) so buffeted thee on the nape of the neck with my steel glove, that thou lost sense, and I with much ado, the stream being strong, did draw thy body to land, but insensible and full of water. Then I took thee on my back and made for my own home. 'Teresa will nurse him, and be pleased with me,' thought I. But, hard by this monastery, a holy friar, the biggest e'er I saw, met us, and asked the matter. So I told him. He looked hard at thee. 'I know the face,' quoth he.

'Tis one Gerard, a fair youth from Holland.' 'The same,' quo' I. Then said his reverence, 'He hath friends among our brethren. Leave him with us. Charity, it is our office.'

"Also he told me they of the convent had better means to tend thee than I had. And that was true enow. So I just bargained to be let in to see thee once a day, and here thou art."

And the miscreant cast a strange look of affection and interest upon Gerard.

Gerard did not respond to it. He felt as if a snake were in the room. He closed his eyes.

"Ah, thou wouldst sleep," said the miscreant, eagerly. "I go." And he retired on tip-toe with a promise to come every day.

Gerard lay with his eyes closed: not asleep, but deeply pondering.

Saved from death by an assassin!

Was not this the finger of Heaven?

Of that Heaven he had insulted, cursed, and defied.

He shuddered at his blasphemies. He tried to pray.

He found he could utter prayers. But he could not pray.

"I am doomed eternally," he cried, "doomed, doomed."

The organ of the convent church burst on his ear in rich and solemn harmony.

Then rose the voices of the choir chanting a full service.

Among them was one that seemed to hover above the others, and tower towards heaven; a sweet boy's voice, full, pure, angelic.

He closed his eyes and listened. The days of his own boyhood flowed back upon him in those sweet, pious har-

monies. No earthly dross there, no foul, fierce passions, rending and corrupting the soul.

Peace, peace; sweet, balmy peace.

"Ay," he sighed, "the Church is peace of mind. Till I left her bosom I ne'er knew sorrow nor sin."

And the poor, torn, worn creature wept.

And, even as he wept, there beamed on him the sweet and reverend face of one he had never thought to see again. It was the face of Father Anselm.

The good father had only reached the convent the night before last. Gerard recognized him in a moment, and cried to him, "O Father Anselm! you cured my wounded body in Juliers, now cure my hurt soul in Rome! Alas, you cannot!"

Anselm sat down by the bedside, and, putting a gentle hand on his head, first calmed him with a soothing word or two.

He then (for he had learned how Gerard came there) spoke to him kindly but solemnly, and made him feel his crime, and urged him to repentance and gratitude to that Divine Power, which had thwarted his will to save his soul.

"Come, my son," said he, "first purge thy bosom of its load."

"Ah, father," said Gerard, "in Juliers I could; then I was innocent; but now, impious monster that I am, I dare not confess to you."

"Why not, my son? Thinkest thou I have not sinned against Heaven in my time, and deeply, oh, how deeply? Come, poor laden soul, pour forth thy grief, pour forth thy faults; hold back nought! Lie not oppressed and crushed by hidden sins."

And soon Gerard was at Father Anselm's knees, confessing his every sin with sighs and groans of penitence.

"Thy sins are great," said Anselm. "Thy temptation

also was great, terribly great. I must consult our good prior."

The good Anselm kissed his brow, and left him to consult the superior as to his penance.

And lo! Gerard could pray now.

And he prayed with all his heart.

The phase through which this remarkable mind now passed, may be summed in a word — Penitence.

He turned with terror and aversion from the world, and begged passionately to remain in the convent. To him, convent nurtured, it was like a bird returning wounded, wearied, to its gentle nest.

He passed his novitiate in prayer and mortification, and pious reading and meditation.

The Princess Clælia's spy went home and told her that Gerard was certainly dead, the manner of his death unknown at present.

She seemed literally stunned.

When, after a long time, she found breath to speak at all, it was to bemoan her lot, cursed with such ready tools. "So soon," she sighed; "see how swift these monsters are to do ill deeds. They come to us in our hot blood, and first tempt us with their venal daggers; then enact the mortal deeds we ne'er had thought on but for them."

Ere many hours had passed, her pity for Gerard and hatred of his murderer had risen to fever heat; which with this fool was blood heat.

"Poor soul! I cannot call thee back to life; but he shall never live that traitorously slew thee."

And she put armed men in ambush, and kept them on guard all day, ready, when Lodovico should come for his money, to fall on him in a certain ante-chamber and hack him to pieces.

"Strike at his head," said she, "for he weareth a privy coat of mail; and if he goes hence alive your own heads shall answer it."

And so she sat weeping her victim, and pulling the strings of machines to shed the blood of a second for having been her machine to kill the first.

CHAPTER XXI.

One of the novice Gerard's self-imposed penances was to receive Lodovico kindly, feeling secretly as to a slimy serpent.

Never was self-denial better bestowed: and, like most rational penances, it soon became no penance at all. At first the pride and complacency with which the assassin gazed on the one life he had saved was perhaps as ludicrous as pathetic, but it is a great thing to open a good door in a heart. One good thing follows another through the aperture. Finding it so sweet to save life, the miscreant went on to be averse to taking it; and from that to remorse; and from remorse to something very like penitence. And here Teresa co-operated by threatening, not for the first time, to leave him unless he would consent to lead an honest life. The good fathers of the convent lent their aid, and Lodovico and Teresa were sent by sea to Leghorn, where Teresa had friends, and the assassin settled down and became a porter.

He found it miserably dull work at first, and said so.

But methinks this dull life of plodding labor was better for him than the brief excitement of being hewn in pieces by the Princess Clælia's myrmidons. His exile saved the unconscious penitent from that fate; and the princess, balked of her revenge, took to brooding, and fell into a profound melancholy; dismissed her confessor, and took a new one with a great reputation for piety, to whom she confided what she called her griefs. The new confessor was no other than Fra Jerome. She could not have fallen into better hands.

He heard her grimly out. Then took her and shook the delusions out of her as roughly as if she had been a kitchen-maid. For, to do this hard monk justice, on the path of duty he feared the anger of princes as little as he did the sea. He showed her in a few words, all thunder and lightning, that she was the criminal of criminals.

"Thou art the devil, that with thy money hath tempted one man to slay his fellow, and then, blinded with self-love, instead of blaming and punishing thyself, art thirsting for more blood of guilty men, but not so guilty as thou."

At first she resisted, and told him she was not used to be taken to task by her confessors. But he overpowered her, and so threatened her with the Church's curse here and hereafter, and so tore the scales off her eyes, and thundered at her, and crushed her, that she sank down and grovelled with remorse and terror at the feet of the gigantic Boanerges.

"Oh, holy father, have pity on a poor, weak woman, and help me save my guilty soul. I was benighted for want of ghostly counsel like thine, good father. I waken as from a dream."

"Doff thy jewels," said Fra Jerome, sternly.

"I will, I will."

"Doff thy silk and velvet; and, in humbler garb than wears thy meanest servant, wend thou instant to Loretto."

"I will," said the princess, faintly.

"No shoes, but a bare sandal."

"No, father."

"Wash the feet of pilgrims both going and coming; and to such of them as be holy friars tell thy sin, and abide their admonition."

"Oh, holy father, let me wear my mask."

"Humph!"

"Oh, mercy! Bethink thee! My features are known through Italy."

"Ay; beauty is a curse to most of ye. Well, thou mayst mask thine eyes; no more."

On this concession she seized his hand, and was about to kiss it; but he snatched it rudely from her.

"What would ye do? That hand handled the eucharist but an hour agone: is it fit for such as thou to touch it?"

"Ah, no. But, oh, go not without giving your penitent daughter your blessing."

"Time enow to ask it when you come back from Loretto."

Thus that marvellous occurrence by Tiber's banks left its mark on all the actors, as prodigies are said to do. The assassin, softened by saving the life he was paid to take, turned from the stiletto to the porter's knot. The princess went barefoot to Loretto, weeping her crime and washing the feet of base-born men.

And Gerard, carried from the Tiber into that convent a suicide, now passed for a young saint within its walls.

Loving but experienced eyes were on him.

Upon a shorter probation than usual he was admitted to priests' orders.

And soon after took the monastic vows, and became a friar of St. Dominic.

Dying to the world, the monk parted with the very name by which he had lived in it, and so broke the last link of association with earthly feeling.

Here Gerard ended, and Brother Clement began.

CHAPTER XXII.

"As is the race of leaves, so is that of man." And a great man budded unnoticed in a tailor's house at Rotterdam this year, and a large man dropped to earth with great *éclat.*

Philip, Duke of Burgundy, Earl of Holland, etc., etc., lay sick at Bruges. Now paupers got sick and got well as nature pleased: but woe betided the rich in an age when, for one Mr. Malady killed, three fell by Dr. Remedy.

The duke's complaint, nameless then, is now diphtheria. It is, and was, a very weakening malady, and the duke was old; so altogether Dr. Remedy bled him.

The duke turned very cold: wonderful!

Then Dr. Remedy had recourse to the arcana of science.

"Ho! this is grave. Flay me an ape incontinent, and clap him to the duke's breast!"

Officers of state ran septemvious, seeking an ape to counteract the bloodthirsty tomfoolery of the human species.

Perdition! The duke was out of apes. There were buffaloes, lizards, Turks, leopards; any unreasonable beast but the right one.

"Why, there used to be an ape about," said one. "If I stand here, I saw him."

So there used; but the mastiff had mangled the sprightly creature for stealing his supper, and so fulfilled the human precept: "*Soyez de votre siècle!*"

In this emergency, the seneschal cast his despairing eyes around; and not in vain. A hopeful light shot into them.

"Here is *this*," said he, *sotto voce*. "Surely *this* will serve; 'tis altogether apelike, doublet and hose apart."

"Nay," said the chancellor, peevishly, "the Princess Marie would hang us. She doteth on *this*."

Now *this* was our friend Giles, strutting, all unconscious, in cloth of gold.

Then Dr. Remedy grew impatient, and bade flay a dog.

"A dog is next best to an ape; only it must be a dog all of one color."

So they flayed a liver-colored dog, and clapped it, yet palpitating, to their sovereign's breast: and he died.

Philip the Good, thus scientifically disposed of, left thirty-one children: of whom one, somehow or another, was legitimate; and reigned in his stead.

The good duke provided for nineteen out of the other thirty; the rest shifted for themselves.

According to the Flemish chronicle the deceased prince was descended from the kings of Troy through Thierry of Aquitaine, and Chilperic, Pharamond, etc., the old kings of Franconia.

But this in reality was no distinction. Not a prince of his day have I been able to discover who did not come down from Troy. "Priam" was mediæval for "Adam."

The good duke's body was carried into Burgundy, and laid in a noble mausoleum of black marble at Dijon.

Holland rang with his death; and little dreamed that anything as famous was born in her territory that year. That judgment has been long reversed. Men gaze at the tailor's house, where the great birth of the fifteenth century took place. In what house the good duke died "no one knows and no one cares," as the song says.

And why?

Dukes Philip the Good come and go, and leave man-

kind not a halfpenny wiser, nor better, nor other, than they found it. But when, once in three hundred years, such a child is born to the world as Margaret's son, lo! a human torch lighted by fire from heaven; and *"Fiat lux"* thunders from pole to pole.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CLOISTER.

The Dominicans, or preaching friars, once the most powerful order in Europe, were now on the wane; their rivals and bitter enemies, the Franciscans, were overpowering them throughout Europe; even in England, a rich and religious country, where, under the name of the Black Friars, they had once been paramount.

Therefore the sagacious men, who watched and directed the interests of the order, were never so anxious to incorporate able and zealous sons, and send them forth to win back the world.

The zeal and accomplishments of Clement, especially his rare mastery of language (for he spoke Latin, Italian, French, high and low Dutch) soon transpired, and he was destined to travel and preach in England, corresponding with the Roman centre.

But Jerome, who had the superior's ear, obstructed this design.

"Clement," said he, "has the milk of the world still in his veins, its feelings, its weaknesses; let not his new-born zeal and his humility tempt us to forego our ancient wisdom. Try him first, and temper him, lest one day we find ourselves leaning on a reed for a staff."

"It is well advised," said the prior. "Take him in hand thyself."

Then Jerome, following the ancient wisdom, took Clement and tried him.

One day he brought him to a field where the young

men amused themselves at the games of the day; he knew this to be a haunt of Clement's late friends.

And sure enough ere long Pietro Vanucci and Andrea passed by them, and cast a careless glance on the two friars. They did not recognize their dead friend in a shaven monk.

Clement gave a very little start, and then lowered his eyes and said a paternoster.

"Would ye not speak with them, brother?" said Jerome, trying him.

"No, brother: yet was it good for me to see them. They remind me of the sins I can never repent enough."

"It is well," said Jerome, and he made a cold report in Clement's favor.

Then Jerome took Clement to many death-beds. And then into noisome dungeons; places where the darkness was appalling, and the stench loathsome, pestilential; and men looking like wild beasts lay coiled in rags and filth and despair. It tried his body hard; but the soul collected all its powers to comfort such poor wretches there as were not past comfort. And Clement shone in that trial. Jerome reported that Clement's spirit was willing, but his flesh was weak.

"Good!" said Anselm; "his flesh is weak, but his spirit is willing."

But there was a greater trial in store.

I will describe it as it was seen by others.

One morning a principal street in Rome was crowded, and even the avenues blocked up with heads. It was an execution. No common crime had been done, and on no vulgar victim.

The governor of Rome had been found in his bed at daybreak, *slaughtered.* His hand, raised probably in self-defence, lay by his side severed at the wrist; his throat was cut, and his temples bruised with some blunt

instrument. The murder had been traced to his servant, and was to be expiated in kind this very morning.

Italian executions were not cruel in general. But this murder was thought to call for exact and bloody retribution.

The criminal was brought to the house of the murdered man, and fastened for half an hour to its wall. After this foretaste of legal vengeance his left hand was struck off, like his victim's. A new-killed fowl was cut open and fastened round the bleeding stump; with what view I really don't know; but, by the look of it, some mare's nest of the poor dear doctors; and the murderer, thus mutilated and bandaged, was hurried to the scaffold, and there a young friar was most earnest and affectionate in praying with him, and for him, and holding the crucifix close to his eyes.

Presently the executioner pulled the friar roughly on one side, and in a moment felled the culprit with a heavy mallet, and, falling on him, cut his throat from ear to ear.

There was a cry of horror from the crowd.

The young friar swooned away.

A gigantic monk strode forward, and carried him off like a child.

Brother Clement went back to the convent sadly discouraged. He confessed to the prior, with tears of regret.

"Courage, son Clement," said the prior. "A Dominican is not made in a day. Thou shalt have another trial. And I forbid thee to go to it fasting." Clement bowed his head in token of obedience. He had not long to wait. A robber was brought to the scaffold; a monster of villany and cruelty, who had killed men in pure wantonness, after robbing them. Clement passed his last night in prison with him, accompanied him to

the scaffold, and then prayed with him and for him so earnestly that the hardened ruffian shed tears and embraced him. Clement embraced him too, though his flesh quivered with repugnance; and held the crucifix earnestly before his eyes. The man was garrotted, and Clement lost sight of the crowd, and prayed loud and earnestly while that dark spirit was passing from earth. He was no sooner dead than the hangman raised his hatchet and quartered the body on the spot. And, oh, mysterious heart of man! the people who had seen the living body robbed of life with indifference, almost with satisfaction, uttered a piteous cry at each stroke of the axe upon his corpse that could feel nought. Clement too shuddered then, but stood firm, like one of those rocks that vibrate but cannot be thrown down. But suddenly Jerome's voice sounded in his ear.

"Brother Clement, get thee on that cart and preach to the people. Nay, quickly! strike with all thy force on all this iron, while yet 'tis hot, and souls are to be saved."

Clement's color came and went; and he breathed hard. But he obeyed, and with ill-assured step mounted the cart, and preached his first sermon to the first crowd he had ever faced. Oh, that sea of heads! His throat seemed parched, his heart thumped, his voice trembled.

By-and-by the greatness of the occasion, the sight of the eager upturned faces, and his own heart full of zeal, fired the pale monk. He told them this robber's history, warm from his own lips in the prison, and showed his hearers by that example the gradations of folly and crime, and warned them solemnly not to put foot on the first round of that fatal ladder. And as alternately he thundered against the shedders of blood, and moved the crowd to charity and pity, his tremors left him, and he

felt all strung up like a lute, and gifted with an unsuspected force; he was master of that listening crowd, could feel their very pulse, could play sacred melodies on them as on his psaltery. Sobs and groans attested his power over the mob already excited by the tragedy before them. Jerome stared like one who goes to light a stick, and fires a rocket. After a while Clement caught his look of astonishment, and, seeing no approbation in it, broke suddenly off, and joined him.

"It was my first endeavor," said he, apologetically. "Your behest came on me like a thunderbolt. Was I — did I? — Oh, correct me and aid me with your experience, brother Jerome."

"Humph!" said Jerome, doubtfully. He added rather sullenly after long reflection, "Give the glory to God, brother Clement; my opinion is, thou art an orator born."

He reported the same at headquarters, half reluctantly. For he was an honest friar though a disagreeable one.

One Julio Antonelli was accused of sacrilege; three witnesses swore they saw him come out of the church whence the candlesticks were stolen, and at the very time. Other witnesses proved an alibi for him as positively. Neither testimony could be shaken. In this doubt Antonelli was permitted the trial by water, hot or cold. By the hot trial he must put his bare arm into boiling water, fourteen inches deep, and take out a pebble; by the cold trial his body must be let down into eight feet of water. The clergy, who thought him innocent, recommended the hot water trial, which, to those whom they favored, was not so terrible as it sounded. But the poor wretch had not the nerve, and chose the cold ordeal. And this gave Jerome another opportunity of steeling Clement. Antonelli took the sacrament, and then was stripped naked on the banks of the Tiber, and

tied hand and foot, to prevent those struggles by which a man, throwing his arms out of the water, sinks his body.

He was then let down gently into the stream, and floated a moment, with just his hair above water. A simultaneous roar from the crowd on each bank proclaimed him guilty. But the next moment the ropes, which happened to be new, got wet, and he settled down. Another roar proclaimed his innocence. They left him at the bottom of the river the appointed time, rather more than half a minute, then drew him up, gurgling, and gasping, and screaming for mercy; and, after the appointed prayers, dismissed him, cleared of the charge.

During the experiment Clement prayed earnestly on the bank. When it was over he thanked God in a loud but slightly quavering voice.

By-and-by he asked Jerome whether the man ought not to be compensated.

"For what?"

"For the pain, the dread, the suffocation. Poor soul, he liveth, but hath tasted all the bitterness of death. Yet he had done no ill."

"He is rewarded enough in that he is cleared of his fault."

"But, being innocent of that fault, yet hath he drunk Death's cup, though not to the dregs; and his accusers, less innocent than he, do suffer nought."

Jerome replied, somewhat sternly:

"It is not in this world men are really punished, brother Clement. Unhappy they who sin, yet suffer not. And happy they who suffer such ills as earth hath power to inflict; 'tis counted to them above, ay, and a hundredfold."

Clement bowed his head submissively.

"May thy good words not fall to the ground, but take root in my heart, brother Jerome."

But the severest trial Clement underwent at Jerome's hands was unpremeditated. It came about thus. Jerome, in an indulgent moment, went with him to Fra Colonna, and there "The Dream of Polifilo" lay on the table just copied fairly. The poor author, in the pride of his heart, pointed out a master-stroke in it.

"For ages," said he, "fools have been lavishing poetic praise and amorous compliment on mortal women, mere creatures of earth, smacking palpably of their origin; sirens at the windows, where our Roman women in particular have by lifelong study learned the wily art to show their one good feature, though but an ear or an eyelash, at a jalosy, and hide all the rest; magpies at the door, *Capre n' i giardini, Angeli in Strada, Sante in chiesa, Diavoli in casa.* Then come I and ransack the minstrels' lines for amorous turns, not forgetting those which Petrarch wasted on that French jilt Laura, the slyest of them all; and I lay you the whole bundle of spice at the feet of the only females worthy amorous incense; to wit, the Nine Muses."

"By which goodly stratagem," said Jerome, who had been turning the pages all this time, "you, a friar of St. Dominic, have produced an obscene book." And he dashed Polifilo on the table.

"Obscene? thou discourteous monk!" And the author ran round the table, snatched Polifilo away, locked him up, and, trembling with mortification, said, "My Gerard — pshaw! brother What's-his-name — had not found Polifilo obscene. *Puris omnia pura.*"

"Such as read your Polifilo — Heaven grant they may be few! — will find him what I find him."

Poor Colonna gulped down this bitter pill as he might; and had he not been in his own lodgings, and a high-born gentleman as well as a scholar, there might have been a vulgar quarrel. As it was, he made a great effort

and turned the conversation to a beautiful chrysolite the Cardinal Colonna had lent him; and, while Clement handled it, enlarged on its moral virtues: for he went the whole length of his age as a worshipper of jewels. But Jerome did not, and expostulated with him for believing that one dead stone could confer valor on its wearer, another chastity, another safety from poison, another temperance.

"The experience of ages proves they do," said Colonna. "As to the last virtue you have named, there sits a living proof. This Gerard — I beg pardon, brother Thingemy — comes from the north, where men drink like fishes; yet was he ever most abstemious. And why? Carried an amethyst, the clearest and fullest colored e'er I saw on any but noble finger. Where, in Heaven's name, is thine amethyst? Show it this unbeliever!"

"And 'twas that amethyst made the boy temperate?" asked Jerome, ironically.

"Certainly. Why, what is the derivation and meaning of amethyst? α negative, and μεθυα to tipple. Go to, names are but the signs of things. A stone is not called αμεθυστος for two thousand years out of mere sport, and abuse of language."

He then went through the prime jewels, illustrating their moral properties, especially of the ruby, the sapphire, the emerald, and the opal, by anecdotes out of grave historians.

"These be old wives' fables," said Jerome, contemptuously. "Was ever such credulity as thine?"

Now credulity is a reproach sceptics have often the ill-luck to incur; but it mortifies them none the less for that.

The believer in stones writhed under it, and dropped the subject. Then Jerome, mistaking his silence, exhorted him to go a step farther, and give up from this

day his vain pagan lore, and study the lives of the saints. "Blot out these heathen superstitions from thy mind, brother, as Christianity hath blotted them from the earth."

And in this strain he proceeded, repeating, incautiously, some current but loose theological statements. Then the smarting Polifilo revenged himself. He flew out, and hurled a mountain of crude, miscellaneous lore upon Jerome, of which, partly for want of time, partly for lack of learning, I can reproduce but a few fragments.

"The heathen blotted out? Why, they hold four-fifths of the world. And what have we Christians invented without their aid? Painting? sculpture? these are heathen arts, and we but pygmies at them. What modern mind can conceive and grave so godlike forms as did the chief Athenian sculptors, and the Libyan Licas, and Dinocrates of Macedon, and Scopas, Timotheus, Leochares, and Briaxis; Chares, Lysippus, and the immortal three of Rhodes, that wrought Laocoön from a single block? What prince hath the genius to turn mountains into statues, as was done at Bagistan, and projected at Athos? what town the soul to plant a colossus of brass in the sea, for the tallest ships to sail in and out between his legs? Is it architecture we have invented? Why, here too we are but children. Can we match for pure design the Parthenon, with its clusters of double and single Doric columns? (I do adore the Doric when the scale is large), and, for grandeur and finish, the theatres of Greece and Rome, or the prodigious temples of Egypt, up to whose portals men walked awe-struck through avenues a mile long of sphinxes, each as big as a Venetian palace. And all these prodigies of porphyry cut and polished like crystal, not rough hewn as in our puny structures. Even now their polished col-

umns and pilasters lie o'erthrown and broken, o'ergrown with acanthus and myrtle, but sparkling still, and flouting the slovenly art of modern workmen. Is it sewers, aqueducts, viaducts ?

"Why, we have lost the art of making a road — lost it with the world's greatest models under our very eye. Is it sepulchres of the dead ? Why, no Christian nation has erected a tomb, the sight of which does not set a scholar laughing. Do but think of the Mausoleum, and the Pyramids, and the monstrous sepulchres of the Indus and Ganges, which outside are mountains, and within are mines of precious stones. Ah, you have not seen the East, Jerome, or you could not decry the heathen."

Jerome observed that these were mere material things. True greatness was in the soul.

"Well, then," replied Colonna, "in the world of mind, what have we discovered ? Is it geometry ? Is it logic ? Nay, we are all pupils of Euclid and Aristotle. Is it written characters, an invention almost divine ? We no more invented it than Cadmus did. Is it poetry ? Homer hath never been approached by us, nor hath Virgil, nor Horace. Is it tragedy or comedy ? Why, poets, actors, theatres, all fell to dust at our touch. Have we succeeded in reviving them ? Would you compare our little miserable mysteries and moralities, all frigid personification and dog Latin, with the glories of a Greek play (on the decoration of which a hundred thousand crowns had been spent) performed inside a marble miracle, the audience a seated city, and the poet a Sophocles ?

"What, then, have we invented ? Is it monotheism ? Why, the learned and philosophical among the Greeks and Romans held it : even their more enlightened poets were monotheists in their sleeves.

'Ζευς εστιν ουρανος, Ζευς τε γῆ Ζευς τοι παντα,'

saith the Greek, and Lucan echoes him:

'Jupiter est quod cunque vides quo cunque moveris.'

"Their vulgar were polytheists; and what are ours? We have not invented 'invocation of the saints.' Our *sancti* answers to their Dæmones and Divi, and the heathen used to pray their Divi or deified mortals to intercede with the higher divinity; but the ruder minds among them, incapable of nice distinctions, worshipped those lesser gods they should have but invoked. And so do the mob of Christians in our day, following the heathen vulgar by unbroken tradition. For in holy writ is no polytheism of any sort or kind.

"We have not invented so much as a form, or variety, of polytheism. The pagan vulgar worshipped all sorts of deified mortals, and each had his favorite, to whom he prayed ten times for once to the Omnipotent. Our vulgar worship canonized mortals, and each has his favorite, to whom he prays ten times for once to God. Call you that invention? Invention is confined to the East. Among the ancient vulgar only the mariners were monotheists; they worshipped Venus; called her *Stella maris*, and *Regina cœlorum*. Among our vulgar only the mariners are monotheists; they worship the Virgin Mary, and call her the 'Star of the Sea,' and the 'Queen of Heaven.' Call you theirs a new religion? An old doublet with a new button. Our vulgar make images and adore them, which is absurd; for adoration is the homage due from a creature to its creator; now here man is the creator; so the statues ought to worship him, and would if they had brains enough to justify a rat in worshipping *them*. But even this abuse, though childish enough to be modern, is ancient. The pagan vulgar in

these parts made their images, then knelt before them, adorned them with flowers, offered incense to them, lighted tapers before them, carried them in procession, and made pilgrimages to them, just to the smallest tittle as we their imitators do."

Jerome here broke in impatiently, and reminded him that the images the most revered in Christendom were made by no mortal hand, but had dropped from heaven.

"Ay," cried Colonna, "such are the tutelary images of most great Italian towns. I have examined nineteen of them, and made draughts of them. If they came from the sky, our worst sculptors are our angels. But my mind is easy on that score. Ungainly statue, or villanous daub, fell never yet from heaven to smuggle the bread out of capable workmen's mouths. All this is Pagan, and arose thus. The Trojans had Oriental imaginations, and feigned that their Palladium, a wooden statue three cubits long, fell down from heaven. The Greeks took this fib home among the spoils of Troy, and soon it rained statues on all the Grecian cities, and their Latin apes. And one of these Palladia gave St. Paul trouble at Ephesus; 'twas a statue of Diana that fell down from Jupiter: *credat qui credere possit.*"

"What, would you cast your profane doubts on that picture of our blessed Lady, which scarce a century agone hung lustrous in the air over this very city, and was taken down by the Pope and bestowed in St. Peter's Church?"

"I have no profane doubts on the matter, Jerome. This is the story of Numa's shield, revived by theologians with an itch for fiction, but no talent that way; not being Orientals. The *ancile* or sacred shield of Numa hung lustrous in the air over this very city, till that pious prince took it down and hung it in the temple of Jupiter. Be just, swallow both stories or neither. The

Bocca della Verita passes for a statue of the Virgin, and convicted a woman of perjury the other day; it is in reality an image of the goddess Rhea, and the modern figment is one of its ancient traditions; swallow both or neither.

'Qui Bavium non odit amet tua carmina, Mavi.'

"But indeed we owe all our Palladiuncula, and all our speaking, nodding, winking, sweating, bleeding statues, to these poor abused heathens: the Athenian statues all sweated before the battle of Chæronea, so did the Roman statues during Tully's consulship, viz., the statue of Victory at Capua, of Mars at Rome, and of Apollo outside the gates. The Palladium itself was brought to Italy by Æneas, and after keeping quiet three centuries, made an observation in Vesta's Temple: a trivial one, I fear, since it hath not survived; Juno's statue at Veii assented with a nod to go to Rome. Antony's statue on Mount Alban bled from every vein in its marble before the fight of Actium. Others cured diseases: as that of Pelichus, derided by Lucian; for the wiser among the heathen believed in sweating marble, weeping wood, and bleeding brass — as I do. Of all our marks and dents made in stone by soft substances, this saint's knee, and that saint's finger, and t'other's head, the original is heathen. Thus the footprints of Hercules were shown on a rock in Scythia. Castor and Pollux fighting on white horses for Rome against the Latians, left the prints of their hoofs on a rock at Regillum. A temple was built to them on the spot, and the marks were to be seen in Tully's day. You may see near Venice a great stone cut nearly in half by St. George's sword. This he ne'er had done but for the old Roman who cut the whetstone in two with his razor.

'Qui Bavium non odit amet tua carmina, Mavi.'

"Kissing of images, and the Pope's toe, is Eastern Paganism. The Egyptians had it of the Assyrians, the Greeks of the Egyptians, the Romans of the Greeks, and we of the Romans, whose Pontifex Maximus had his toe kissed under the Empire. The Druids kissed their high priest's toe a thousand years B.C. The Mussulmans, who, like you, profess to abhor heathenism, kiss the stone of the Caaba: a Pagan practice.

"The priests of Baal kissed their idols so.

"Tully tells us of a fair image of Hercules at Agrigentum, whose chin was worn by kissing. The lower parts of the statue we call Peter are Jupiter. The toe is sore worn, but not all by Christian mouths. The heathen vulgar laid their lips there first, for many a year, and ours have but followed them, as monkeys their masters. And that is why down with the poor heathen! *Pereant qui ante nos nostra fecerint.*

"Our infant baptism is Persian, with the font, and the signing of the child's brow. Our throwing three handfuls of earth on the coffin, and saying, Dust to dust, is Egyptian.

"Our incense is Oriental, Roman, Pagan; and the early fathers of the Church regarded it with superstitious horror, and died for refusing to handle it. Our holy water is Pagan, and all its uses. See, here is a Pagan aspersorium. Could you tell it from one of ours? It stood in the same part of their temples, and was used in ordinary worship as ours, and in extraordinary purifications. They called it *aqua lustralis.* Their vulgar, like ours, thought drops of it falling on the body would wash out sin; and their men of sense, like ours, smiled or sighed at such credulity. What saith Ovid of this folly, which hath outlived him?

> 'Ah nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cœdis
> Flumineâ tolli posse putetis aquâ.'

Thou seest the heathen were not *all* fools. No more are we. Not *all.*"

Fra Colonna uttered all this with such volubility, that his hearers could not edge in a word of remonstrance; and not being interrupted in praising his favorites, he recovered his good humor without any diminution of his volubility.

"We celebrate the miraculous Conception of the Virgin on the 2d of February. The old Romans celebrated the miraculous Conception of Juno on the 2d of February. Our Feast of All Saints is on the 2d November. The Festum Dei Mortis was on the 2d November. Our Candlemas is also an old Roman feast: neither the date nor the ceremony altered one tittle. The patrician ladies carried candles about the city that night as our signoras do now. At the gate of San Croce our courtesans keep a feast on the 20th August. Ask them why! The little noodles cannot tell you. On that very spot stood the Temple of Venus. Her building is gone; but her rite remains. Did we discover Purgatory? On the contrary, all we really know about it is from two treatises of Plato, the Gorgias and the Phædo, and the sixth book of Virgil's Æneid."

"I take it from a holier source: St. Gregory," said Jerome sternly.

"Like enough," replied Colonna dryly. "But St. Gregory was not so nice; he took it from Virgil. Some souls, saith Gregory, are purged by fire, others by water, others by air.

"Says Virgil: —

> 'Aliæ panduntur inanes,
> Suspensæ ad ventos, aliis sub gurgite vasto
> Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.'

But peradventure, you think Pope Gregory I. lived before Virgil, and Virgil versified him.

"But the doctrine is Eastern, and as much older than Plato as Plato than Gregory. Our prayers for the dead came from Asia with Æneas. Ovid tells, that when he prayed for the soul of Anchises, the custom was strange in Italy.

> 'Hunc morem Ænæas, pietatis idoneus auctor
> Attulit in terras, juste Latine, tuas.'

The 'Biblicæ Sortes,' which I have seen consulted on the altar, are a parody on the 'Sortes Virgilianæ.' Our numerous altars in one church are heathen: the Jews, who are monotheists, have but one altar in a church. But the Pagans had many, being polytheists. In the temple of Paphian Venus were a hundred of them. '*Centum que Sabœo thure calent aræ.*' Our altars and our hundred lights around St. Peter's tomb are Pagan. '*Centum aras posuit vigilemque sacraverat ignem.*' We invent nothing, not even numerically. Our very Devil is the god Pan: horns and hoofs and all; but blackened. For we cannot draw; we can but daub the figures of antiquity with a little sorry paint or soot. Our Moses hath stolen the horns of Ammon; our Wolfgang the hook of Saturn; and Janus bore the keys of heaven before St. Peter. All our really old Italian bronzes of the Virgin and Child are Venuses and Cupids. So is the wooden statue, that stands hard by this house, of Pope Joan and the child she is said to have brought forth there in the middle of a procession. Idiots! are new-born children thirteen years old? And that boy is not a day younger. Cupid! Cupid! Cupid! And since you accuse me of credulity, know that to my mind that Papess is full as mythological, born of froth, and every way unreal, as the goddess who passes for her in the next street, or as the saints you call St. Baccho and St. Quirina: or St. Oracte, which is a dunce-like corruption of Mount Soracte; or St. Amphibo-

lus, an English saint, which is a dunce-like corruption of the cloak worn by their St. Alban; or as the Spanish saint, St. Viar, which words on his tombstone, written thus: 'S. Viar,' prove him no saint, but a good old nameless heathen, and '*præfectus Viarum*,' or overseer of roads (would he were back to earth, and paganizing of our Christian roads!); or as our St. Veronica of Benasco, which Veronica is a dunce-like corruption of the '*Vera icon*,' which this saint brought into the Church. I wish it may not be as unreal as the donor, or as the eleven thousand virgins of Cologne, who were but a couple."

Clement interrupted him to inquire what he meant. "I have spoken with those have seen their bones."

"What, of eleven thousand virgins all collected in one place and at one time? Do but bethink thee, Clement. Not one of the great Eastern cities of antiquity could collect eleven thousand Pagan virgins at one time, far less a puny Western city. Eleven thousand *Christian virgins* in a little, wee Paynim city!

'Quod cunque ostendis mihi sic incredulus odi.'

The simple sooth is this. The martyrs were two: the Breton princess herself, falsely called British, and her maid, Onesimilla, which is a Greek name, Onesima, diminished. This some fool did mispronounce *undecim mille*, eleven thousand: loose tongue found credulous ears, and so one fool made many; eleven thousand of *them*, an you will. And you charge me with credulity, Jerome? and bid me read the lives of the saints. Well, I have read them, and many a dear old Pagan acquaintance I found there. The best fictions in the book are Oriental, and are known to have been current in Persia and Arabia eight hundred years and more before the dates the Church assigns to them as facts. As for the true Western figments, they lack the Oriental plausi-

bility. Think you I am credulous enough to believe that St. Ida joined a decapitated head to its body? that Cuthbert's carcass directed his bearers where to go, and where to stop; that a city was eaten up of rats to punish one Hatto for comparing the poor to mice; that angels have a little horn in their foreheads, and that this was seen and recorded at the time by St. Veronica of Benasco, who never existed, and hath left us this information and a miraculous handkercher? For my part, I think the holiest woman the world ere saw must have an existence ere she can have a handkercher or an eye to take unicorns for angels. Think you I believe that a brace of lions turned sextons and helped Anthony bury Paul of Thebes? that Patrick, a Scotch saint, stuck a goat's beard on all the descendants of one that offended him? that certain thieves having stolen the convent ram, and denying it, St. Pol de Leon bade the ram bear witness, and straight the mutton bleated in the thief's belly? Would you have me give up the skilful figments of antiquity for such old wives' fables as these? The ancients lied about animals, too: but then, they lied logically; we unreasonably. Do but compare Ephis and his lion, or, better still, Androcles and his lion, with Anthony and his two lions. Both the Pagan lions do what lions never did; but at the least they act in character. A lion with a bone in his throat, or a thorn in his foot, could not do better than be civil to a man. But Anthony's lions are asses in a lion's skin. What leonine motive could they have in turning sextons? A lion's business is to make corpses, not inter them." He added, with a sigh, "Our lies are as inferior to the lies of the ancients as our statues, and for the same reason; we do not study nature as they did. We are imitators, *servum pecus*. Believe you 'the lives of the saints;' that Paul the Theban was the first hermit, and Anthony the first

cænobite? Why, Pythagoras was an eremite, and under ground for seven years: and his daughter was an abbess. Monks and hermits were in the East long before Moses, and neither old Greece nor Rome was ever without them. As for St. Francis and his snowballs, he did but mimic Diogenes, who, naked, embraced statues on which snow had fallen. The folly without the poetry. Ape of an ape — for Diogenes was but a mimic therein of the Brahmins and Indian gymnosophists. Natheless, the children of this Francis bid fair to pelt us out of the Church with their snowballs. Tell me now, Clement, what habit is lovelier than the vestments of our priests? Well, we owe them all to Numa Pompilius, except the girdle and the stole, which are Judaical. As for the amice and the alb, they retain the very names they bore in Numa's day. The 'pelt' worn by the canons comes from primeval Paganism. 'Tis a relic of those rude times when the sacrificing priest wore the skins of the beasts with the fur outward. Strip off thy black gown, Jerome, thy girdle and cowl, for they come to us all three from the Pagan ladies. Let thy hair grow like Absalom's, Jerome! for the tonsure is as Pagan as the Muses."

"Take care what thou sayest," said Jerome, sternly. "We know the very year in which the Church did first ordain it."

"But not invent it, Jerome. The Brahmins wore it a few thousand years ere that. From them it came through the Assyrians to the priests of Isis in Egypt, and afterwards of Serapis at Athens. The late Pope (the saints be good to him) once told me the tonsure was forbidden by God to the Levites in the Pentateuch. If so, this was because of the Egyptian priests wearing it. I trust to his Holiness. I am no biblical scholar. The Latin of thy namesake Jerome is a barrier I cannot overleap.

'*Dixit ad me Dominus Deus. Dixi ad Dominum Deum.*' No, thank you, holy Jerome; I can stand a good deal, but I cannot stand thy Latin. Nay; give me the New Testament! 'Tis not the Greek of Xenophon; but 'tis Greek. And there be heathen sayings in it too. For St. Paul was not so spiteful against them as thou. When the heathen said a good thing that suited his matter, by Jupiter he just took it, and mixed it to all eternity with the inspired text."

"Come forth, Clement, come forth!" said Jerome rising; "and thou, profane monk, know that but for the powerful house that upholds thee, thy accursed heresy should go no farther, for I would have thee burned at the stake." And he strode out white with indignation.

Colonna's reception of this threat did credit to him as an enthusiast. He ran and hallooed joyfully after Jerome: "And *that* is Pagan. Burning of men's bodies for the opinions of their souls is a purely Pagan custom — as Pagan as incense, holy water, a hundred altars in one church, the tonsure, the cardinal's or flamen's hat, the word Pope, the" —

Here Jerome slammed the door.

But ere they could get clear of the house a jalosy was flung open, and the Paynim monk came out head and shoulders, and overhung the street, shouting —

> "'Affecti suppliciis Christiani, genus hominum
> Novæ superstitionis ac maleficæ.'"

And having delivered this parting blow, he felt a great triumphant joy, and strode exultant to and fro; and not attending with his usual care to the fair way (for his room could only be threaded by little paths wriggling among the antiquities), tripped over the beak of an Egyptian stork, and rolled upon a regiment of Armenian gods, which he found tough in argument though small in stature.

"You will go no more to that heretical monk," said Jerome to Clement.

Clement sighed. "Shall we leave him and not try to correct him? Make allowance for heat of discourse; he was nettled. His words are worse than his acts. Oh! 'tis a pure and charitable soul."

"So are all arch-heretics. Satan does not tempt them like other men. Rather he makes them more moral, to give their teaching weight. Fra Colonna cannot be corrected; his family is all-powerful in Rome. Pray we the saints he blasphemes to enlighten him. 'Twill not be the first time they have returned good for evil. Meantime thou art forbidden to consort with him. From this day go alone through the city. Confess and absolve sinners; exorcise demons; comfort the sick; terrify the impenitent; preach wherever men are gathered and occasion serves; and hold no converse with the Fra Colonna!"

Clement bowed his head.

Then the prior, at Jerome's request, had the young friar watched. And one day the spy returned with the news that brother Clement had passed by the Fra Colonna's lodging, and had stopped a little while in the street, and then gone on, but with his hand to his eyes, and slowly.

This report Jerome took to the prior. The prior asked his opinion, and also Anselm's, who was then taking leave of him on his return to Juliers.

Jerome. Humph! He obeyed, but with regret, ay, with childish repining.

Anselm. He shed a natural tear at turning his back on a friend and a benefactor. But he obeyed.

Now Anselm was one of your gentle irresistibles. He had at times a mild ascendant even over Jerome.

"Worthy brother Anselm," said Jerome, "Clement is

weak to the very bone. He will disappoint thee. He will do nothing *great*, either for the Church or for our holy order. Yet he is an orator, and hath drunken of the spirit of St. Dominic. Fly him, then, with a string."

That same day it was announced to Clement that he was to go to England immediately with brother Jerome.

Clement folded his hands on his breast, and bowed his head in calm submission.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE HEARTH.

A Catherine is not an unmixed good in a strange house. The governing power is strong in her. She has scarce crossed the threshold ere the utensils seem to brighten; the hearth to sweep itself; the windows to let in more light; and the soul of an enormous cricket to animate the dwelling-place. But this cricket is a busy-body. And that is a tremendous character. It has no discrimination. It sets everything to rights, and every-body. Now many things are the better for being set to rights. But everything is not. Everything is the one thing that won't stand being set to rights, except in that calm and cool retreat, the grave.

Catherine altered the position of every chair and table in Margaret's house, and perhaps for the better.

But she must go further, and upset the live furniture.

When Margaret's time was close at hand, Catherine treacherously invited the aid of Denys and Martin; and, on the poor, simple-minded fellows asking her earnestly what service they could be, she told them they might make themselves comparatively useful by going for a little walk. So far so good. But she intimated further that should the promenade extend into the middle of next week, all the better. This was not ingratiating.

The subsequent conduct of the strong under the yoke of the weak might have propitiated a she-bear with three cubs, one sickly. They generally slipped out of the house at daybreak, and stole in like thieves at night;

and if by any chance they were at home, they went about like cats on a wall tipped with broken glass, and wearing awe-struck visages, and a general air of subjugation and depression.

But all would not do. Their very presence was ill-timed, and jarred upon Catherine's nerves.

Did instinct whisper, a pair of depopulators had no business in a house with multipliers twain?

The breastplate is no armor against a female tongue, and Catherine ran infinite pins and needles of speech into them. In a word, when Margaret came down-stairs, she found the kitchen swept of heroes.

Martin, old and stiff, had retreated no farther than the street, and with the honors of war: for he had carried off his baggage, a stool, and sat on it in the air.

Margaret saw he was out in the sun, but was not aware he was a fixture in that luminary. She asked for Denys. "Good, kind Denys: he will be right pleased to see me about again."

Catherine, wiping a bowl with now superfluous vigor, told her Denys was gone to his friends in Burgundy. "And high time. Hasn't been a-nigh them this three years, by all accounts."

"What, gone without bidding me farewell?" said Margaret, opening two tender eyes like full-blown violets.

Catherine reddened. For this new view of the matter set her conscience pricking her.

But she gave a little toss, and said, "Oh, you were asleep at the time, and I would not have you wakened."

"Poor Denys," said Margaret; and the dew gathered visibly on the open violets.

Catherine saw out of the corner of her eye, and, without taking a bit of open notice, slipped off and lavished hospitality and tenderness on the surviving depopulator.

It was sudden; and Martin old and stiff in more ways than one.

"No, thank you, dame. I have got used to out o' doors. And I love not changing and changing. I meddle wi' nobody here, and nobody meddles wi' me."

"Oh, you nasty, cross, old wretch!" screamed Catherine, passing in a moment from treacle to sharpest vinegar. And she flounced back into the house.

On calm reflection she had a little cry. Then she half reconciled herself to her conduct by vowing to be so kind, Margaret should never miss her plagues of soldiers. But, feeling still a little uneasy, she dispersed all regrets by a process at once simple and sovereign.

She took and washed the child.

From head to foot she washed him in tepid water; and heroes, and their wrongs, became as dust in an ocean — of soap and water.

While this celestial ceremony proceeded, Margaret could not keep quiet. She hovered round the fortunate performer. She must have an apparent hand in it, if not a real. She put her finger into the water — to pave the way for her boy, I suppose, for she could not have deceived herself so far as to think Catherine would allow her to settle the temperature. During the ablution she kneeled down opposite the little Gerard, and prattled to him with amazing fluency; taking care, however, not to articulate like grown-up people; for, how could a cherub understand *their* ridiculous pronunciation?

"I wish you could wash out THAT," said she, fixing her eyes on the little boy's hand.

"What?"

"What, have you not noticed? on his little finger."

Granny looked, and there was a little brown mole.

"Eh, but this is wonderful!" she cried. "Nature, my

lass, y' are strong, and meddlesome, to boot. Hast noticed such a mark on some one else? Tell the truth, girl."

"What, on *him?* Nay, mother, not I."

"Well then, he has, and on the very spot. And you never noticed that much. But, dear heart, I forgot; you hain't known him from child to man as I have. I have had him hundreds o' times on my knees, the same as this, and washed him from top to toe in lu-warm water." And she swelled with conscious superiority; and Margaret looked meekly up to her as a woman beyond competition.

Catherine looked down from her dizzy height, and moralized. She differed from other busybodies in this, that she now and then reflected; not deeply; or of course I should take care not to print it.

"It is strange," said she, "how things come round and about. Life is but a whirligig. Leastways, we poor women, *our* lives are all cut upon one pattern. Wasn't I for washing out my Gerard's mole in his young days? 'Oh, fie! here's a foul blot,' quo' I; and scrubbed away at it I did till I made the poor wight cry; so then I thought 'twas time to give over. And now says you to me, 'Mother,' says you, 'do try and wash yon out o' my Gerard's finger,' says you. Think on't!"

"Wash it out?" cried Margaret; "I wouldn't for all the world. Why, it is the sweetest bit in his little darling body. I'll kiss it morn and night till he, that owned it first, comes back to us three. Oh, bless you, my jewel of gold and silver, for being marked like your own daddy, to comfort me."

And she kissed little Gerard's little mole, but she could not stop there; she presently had him sprawling on her lap, and kissed his back all over again and again, and seemed to worry him as wolf a lamb. Catherine

looking on and smiling. She had seen a good many of these savage onslaughts in her day.

And this little sketch indicates the tenor of Margaret's life for several months. One or two small things occurred to her during that time, which must be told; but I reserve them, since one string will serve for many glass beads. But, while her boy's father was passing through those fearful tempests of the soul, ending in the dead monastic calm, her life might fairly be summed in one great blissful word: —

Maternity.

You, who know what lies in that word, enlarge my little sketch, and see the young mother nursing and washing, and dressing and undressing, and crowing and gambolling with her first-born; then swifter than lightning dart your eye into Italy, and see the cold cloister; and the monks passing like ghosts, eyes down, hands meekly crossed over bosoms dead to earthly feelings.

One of these cowled ghosts is he, whose return, full of love, and youth. and joy, that radiant young mother awaits.

In the valley of Grindelwald the traveller has on one side the perpendicular Alps, all rock, ice, and everlasting snow, towering above the clouds, and piercing to the sky; on his other hand little every-day slopes, but green as emeralds, and studded with cows and pretty cots, and life; whereas those lofty neighbors stand leafless, lifeless, inhuman, sublime. Elsewhere sweet commonplaces of nature are apt to pass unnoticed; but, fronting the grim Alps, they soothe, and even gently strike, the mind by contrast with their tremendous opposites. Such, in their way, are the two halves of this story, rightly looked at; on the Italian side rugged adventure, strong passion, blasphemy, vice, penitence, pure ice, holy snow, soaring

direct at heaven. On the Dutch side, all on a humble scale and womanish, but ever green. And as a pathway parts the ice towers of Grindelwald, aspiring to the sky, from its little sunny braes, so here is but a page between "the Cloister and the Hearth."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CLOISTER.

The new Pope favored the Dominican order. The convent received a message from the Vatican, requiring a capable friar to teach at the University of Basle. Now Clement was the very monk for this: well versed in languages, and in his worldly days had attended the lectures of Guarini the younger. His visit to England was therefore postponed, though not resigned; and meantime he was sent to Basle; but not being wanted there for three months, he was to preach on the road.

He passed out of the northern gate with his eyes lowered, and the whole man wrapped in pious contemplation.

Oh, if we could paint a mind and its story, what a walking fresco was this barefooted friar!

Hopeful, happy love, bereavement, despair, impiety, vice, suicide, remorse, religious despondency, penitence, death to the world, resignation.

And all in twelve short months.

And now the traveller was on foot again. But all was changed. No perilous adventures now. The very thieves and robbers bowed to the ground before him, and, instead of robbing him, forced stolen money on him, and begged his prayers.

This journey, therefore, furnished few picturesque incidents. I have, however, some readers to think of, who care little for melodrama, and expect a quiet peep at what passes inside a man. To such students things

undramatic are often vocal, denoting the progress of a mind.

The first Sunday of Clement's journey was marked by this. He prayed for the soul of Margaret. He had never done so before. Not that her eternal welfare was not dearer to him than anything on earth. It was his humility. The terrible impieties that burst from him on the news of her death horrified my well-disposed readers; but not as on reflection they horrified him who had uttered them. For a long time during his novitiate he was oppressed with religious despair. He thought he must have committed that sin against the Holy Spirit which dooms the soul forever. By degrees that dark cloud cleared away, *Anselmo juvante:* but deep self-abasement remained. He felt his own salvation insecure; and, moreover, thought it would be mocking Heaven, should he, the deeply stained, pray for a soul so innocent, comparatively, as Margaret's. So he used to coax good Anselm and another kindly monk to pray for her. They did not refuse, nor do it by halves. In general the good old monks (and there were good, bad, and indifferent, in every convent) had a pure and tender affection for their younger brethren, which, in truth, was not of this world.

Clement, then, having preached on Sunday morning in a small Italian town, and being mightily carried onward, was greatly encouraged; and that day a balmy sense of God's forgiveness and love descended on him. And he prayed for the welfare of Margaret's soul. And from that hour this became his daily habit, and the one purified tie that by memory connected his heart with earth.

For his family were to him as if they had never been.

The Church would not share with earth, nor could even the Church cure the great love without annihilating the smaller ones.

During most of this journey Clement rarely felt any spring of life within him, but when he was in the pulpit. The other exceptions were when he happened to relieve some fellow-creature.

A young man was tarantula bitten, or perhaps, like many more, fancied it. Fancy or reality, he had been for two days without sleep, and in most extraordinary convulsions, leaping, twisting, and beating the walls. The village musicians had only excited him worse with their music. Exhaustion and death followed the disease, when it gained such a head. Clement passed by and learned what was the matter. He sent for a psaltery, and tried the patient with soothing melodies, but, if the other tunes maddened him, Clement's seemed to crush him. He groaned and moaned under them, and grovelled on the floor. At last the friar observed that at intervals his lips kept going. He applied his ear, and found the patient was whispering a tune, and a very singular one, that had no existence. He learned this tune and played it. The patient's face brightened amazingly. He marched about the room on the light fantastic toe, enjoying it; and when Clement's fingers ached nearly off with playing it, he had the satisfaction of seeing the young man sink complacently to sleep to this lullaby, — the strange creation of his own mind; for it seems he was no musician, and never composed a tune before or after. This sleep saved his life. And Clement, after teaching the tune to another, in case it should be wanted again, went forward with his heart a little warmer. On another occasion he found a mob haling a decently-dressed man along, who struggled and vociferated, but in a strange language. This person had walked into their town erect and sprightly, waving a mulberry branch over his head. Thereupon the natives first gazed stupidly, not believing their eyes,

then pounced on him and dragged him before the *podesta.*

Clement went with them, but on the way drew quietly near the prisoner, and spoke to him in Italian; no answer. In French, German, Dutch; no assets. Then the man tried Clement in tolerable Latin, but with a sharpish accent. He said he was an Englishman, and, oppressed with the heat of Italy, had taken a bough off the nearest tree to save his head. "In my country anybody is welcome to what grows on the highway. Confound the fools! I am ready to pay for it. But here is all Italy up in arms about a twig and a handful of leaves."

The pig-headed *podesta* would have sent the dogged islander to prison, but Clement mediated, and with some difficulty made the prisoner comprehend that silkworms, and by consequence mulberry leaves, were sacred, being under the wing of the sovereign, and his source of income, and urged on the *podesta* that ignorance of his mulberry laws was natural in a distant country, where the very tree, perhaps, was unknown. The opinionative islander turned the still vibrating scale by pulling out a long purse and repeating his original theory, that the whole question was mercantile. "*Quid damni?*" said he. "*Dic: et cito solvam.*" The *podesta* snuffed the gold, fined him a ducat for the duke, about the value of the whole tree, and pouched the coin.

The Englishman shook off his ire the moment he was liberated, and laughed heartily at the whole thing, but was very grateful to Clement.

"You are too good for this hole of a country, father," said he. "Come to England! That is the only place in the world. I was an uneasy fool to leave it, and wander among mulberries and their idiots. I am a Kentish squire, and educated at Cambridge University. My

name it is Rolfe, my place Betshanger. The man and the house are both at your service. Come over and stay till domesday. We sit down forty to dinner every day at Betshanger. One more or one less at the board will not be seen. You shall end your days with me and my heirs if you will. Come now! What an Englishman says, he means." And he gave him a great hearty grip of the hand to confirm it.

"I will visit thee some day, my son," said Clement, "but not to weary thy hospitality."

The Englishman then begged Clement to shrive him. "I know not what will become of my soul," said he. "I live like a heathen since I left England."

Clement consented gladly, and soon the islander was on his knees to him by the roadside, confessing the last month's sins.

Finding him so pious a son of the Church, Clement let him know he was really coming to England. He then asked him whether it was true that country was overrun with Lollards and Wickliffites.

The other colored up a little. "There be black sheep in every land," said he. Then after some reflection he said gravely, "Holy father, hear the truth about these heretics. None are better disposed towards holy Church than we English. But we are ourselves, and by ourselves. We love our own ways, and, above all, our own tongue. The Norman could conquer our bill-hooks, but not our tongues; and hard they tried it for many a long year by law and proclamation. Our good foreign priests utter God to plain English folk in Latin, or in some French or Italian lingo, like the bleating of a sheep. Then come the fox Wickliff and his crew, and read Him out of His own book in plain English, that all men's hearts warm to. Who can withstand this? God forgive me, I believe the English would turn deaf ears to

St. Peter himself, spoke he not to them in the tongue their mothers sowed in their ears and their hearts along with mothers' kisses." He added hastily, "I say not this for myself; I am Cambridge bred: and good words come not amiss to me in Latin, but for the people in general. *Clavis ad corda Anglorum est lingua materna.*"

"My son," said Clement, "blessed be the hour I met thee, for thy words are sober and wise. But, alas! how shall I learn your English tongue? No book have I."

"I would give you my book of hours, father. 'Tis in English and Latin, cheek by jowl. But then, what would become of my poor soul, wanting my 'hours' in a strange land? Stay, you are a holy man, and I am an honest one: let us make a bargain, you to pray for me every day for two months, and I to give you my book of hours. Here it is. What say you to that?" And his eyes sparkled, and he was all on fire with mercantility.

Clement smiled gently at this trait, and quietly detached a MS. from his girdle, and showed him that it was in Latin and Italian.

"See, my son," said he, "Heaven hath foreseen our several needs, and given us the means to satisfy them: let us change books; and, my dear son, I will give thee my poor prayers and welcome, not sell them thee. I love not religious bargains."

The islander was delighted. "So shall I learn the Italian tongue without risk to my eternal weal. Near is my purse, but nearer is my soul."

He forced money on Clement. In vain the friar told him it was contrary to his vow to carry more of that than was barely necessary.

"Lay it out for the good of the Church and of my soul," said the islander. "I ask you not to keep it, but take it you must and shall." And he grasped Clement's

hand warmly again; and Clement kissed him on the brow, and blessed him, and they went each his way.

About a mile from where they parted, Clement found two tired wayfarers lying in the deep shade of a great chestnut-tree, one of a thick grove the road skirted. Near the men was a little cart, and in it a printing-press, rude and clumsy as a vine-press. A jaded mule was harnessed to the cart.

And so Clement stood face to face with his old enemy.

And as he eyed it, and the honest, blue-eyed faces of the wearied craftsmen, he looked back as on a dream at the bitterness he had once felt towards this machine. He looked kindly down on them and said softly, —

"Sweynheim!"

The men started to their feet.

"Pannartz!"

They scuttled into the wood, and were seen no more.

Clement was amazed, and stood puzzling himself.

Presently a face peeped from behind a tree.

Clement addressed it. "What fear ye?"

A quavering voice replied, "Say, rather, by what magic you, a stranger, can call us by our names? I never clapt eyes on you till now."

"O superstition! I know ye, as all good workmen are known, — by your works. Come hither and I will tell ye."

They advanced gingerly from different sides, each regulating his advance by the other's.

"My children," said Clement, "I saw a Lactantius in Rome, printed by Sweynheim and Pannartz, disciples of Fust."

"D'ye hear that, Pannartz? our work has gotten to Rome already."

"By your blue eyes and flaxen hair I wist ye were Germans; and the printing-press spoke for itself. Who

then should ye be but Fust's disciples, Pannartz and Sweynheim ?"

The honest Germans were now astonished that they had suspected magic in so simple a matter.

"The good father hath his wits about him, that is all," said Pannartz.

"Ay," said Sweynheim, "and with those wits would he could tell us how to get this tired beast to the next town."

"Yea," said Sweynheim, "and where to find money to pay for his meat and ours when we get there."

"I will try," said Clement. "Free the mule of the cart, and of all harness but the bare halter."

This was done, and the animal immediately lay down and rolled on his back in the dust like a kitten. Whilst he was thus employed, Clement assured them he would rise up a new mule. "His Creator hath taught him this art to refresh himself, which the nobler horse knoweth not. Now, with regard to money, know that a worthy Englishman hath intrusted me with a certain sum to bestow in charity. To whom can I better give a stranger's money than to strangers ? Take it, then, and be kind to some Englishman or other stranger in his need; and may all nations learn to love one another one day."

The tears stood in the honest workmen's eyes. They took the money with heartfelt thanks.

"It is your nation we are bound to thank and bless, good father, if we but knew it."

"My nation is the Church."

Clement was then for bidding them farewell, but the honest fellows implored him to wait a little; they had no silver nor gold, but they had something they could give their benefactor. They took the press out of the cart, and, while Clement fed the mule, they bustled about, now on the white hot road, now in the deep cool

shade, now half in and half out, and presently printed a quarto sheet of eight pages, which was already set up. They had not type enough to print two sheets at a time. When, after the slower preliminaries, the printed sheet was pulled all in a moment, Clement was amazed in turn.

"What, are all these words really fast upon the paper?" said he. "Is it verily certain they will not go as swiftly as they came? And *you* took *me* for a magician! 'Tis 'Augustine de Civitate Dei.' My sons, you carry here the very wings of knowledge. Oh, never abuse this great craft! Print no ill books! They would fly abroad countless as locusts, and lay waste men's souls."

The workmen said they would sooner put their hands under the screw than so abuse their goodly craft.

And so they parted.

There is nothing but meeting and parting in this world.

At a town in Tuscany the holy friar had a sudden and strange rencontre with the past. He fell in with one of those motley assemblages of patricians and plebeians, piety and profligacy, "a company of pilgrims," — a subject too well painted by others for me to go and daub.

They were in an immense barn belonging to the inn. Clement, dusty and wearied, and no lover of idle gossip, sat in a corner studying the Englishman's hours, and making them out as much by his own Dutch as by the Latin version.

Presently a servant brought a bucket half full of water, and put it down at his feet. A female servant followed with two towels. And then a woman came forward, and, crossing herself, kneeled down without a word at the bucket-side, removed her sleeves entirely, and motioned to him to put his feet into the water. It was some lady of rank doing penance. She wore a mask

scarce an inch broad, but effectual. Moreover, she handled the friar's feet more delicately than those do who are born to such offices.

These penances were not uncommon; and Clement, though he had little faith in this form of contrition, received the services of the incognita as a matter of course. But presently she sighed deeply, and, with her heartfelt sigh and her head bent low over her menial office, she seemed so bowed with penitence, that he pitied her, and said, calmly but gently, "Can I aught for your soul's weal, my daughter?"

She shook her head with a faint sob. "Nought, holy father, nought: only to hear the sin of her who is most unworthy to touch thy holy feet. 'Tis part of my penance to tell sinless men how vile I am."

"Speak, my daughter."

"Father," said the lady, bending lower and lower, "these hands of mine look white, but they are stained with blood, — the blood of the man I loved. Alas! you withdraw your foot. Ah, me! What shall I do? All holy things shrink from me."

"*Culpa mea! culpa mea!*" said Clement, eagerly. "My daughter, it was an unworthy movement of earthly weakness, for which *I* shall do penance. Judge not the Church by her feeble servants. Not her foot, but her bosom is offered thee, repenting truly. Take courage, then, and purge thy conscience of its load."

On this the lady in a trembling whisper and hurriedly, cringing a little, as if she feared the Church would strike her bodily for what she had done, made this confession:

"He was a stranger, and base born, but beautiful as Spring, and wise beyond his years. I loved him. I had not the prudence to conceal my love. Nobles courted me. I ne'er thought one of humble birth could reject me. I showed him my heart; oh, shame of my sex!

He drew back; yet he admired me: but innocently. He loved another, and he was constant. I resorted to a woman's wiles. They availed not. I borrowed the wickedness of men, and threatened his life, and to tell his true lover he died false to her. Ah! you shrink; your foot trembles. Am I not a monster? then he wept and prayed to me for mercy; then my good angel helped me; I bade him leave Rome. Gerard, Gerard, why did you not obey me? I thought he was gone. But two months after this I met him. Never shall I forget it. I was descending the Tiber in my galley, when he came up it with a gay company, and at his side a woman beautiful as an angel, but bold and bad. That woman claimed me aloud for her rival. Traitor and hypocrite, he had exposed me to her, and to all the loose tongues in Rome. In terror and revenge I hired — a bravo. When he was gone on his bloody errand, I wavered too late. The dagger I had hired struck. He never came back to his lodgings. He was dead. Alas! perhaps he was not so much to blame: none have ever cast his name in my teeth. His poor body is not found, or I should kiss its wounds, and slay myself upon it. All around his very name seems silent as the grave, to which this murderous hand has sent him. (Clement's eye was drawn by her movement. He recognized her shapely arm and soft white hand.) "And, oh, he was so young to die. A poor thoughtless boy, that had fallen a victim to that bad woman's arts, and she had made him tell her everything. Monster of cruelty, what penance can avail me? Oh, holy father, what shall I do?"

Clement's lips moved in prayer, but he was silent. He could not see his duty clear.

Then she took his feet and began to dry them. She rested his foot upon her soft arm, and pressed it with the towel so gently she seemed incapable of hurting a fly.

Yet her lips had just told another story, and a true one.

While Clement was still praying for wisdom, a tear fell upon his foot. It decided him. "My daughter," said he, "I myself have been a great sinner."

"You, father?"

"I; quite as great a sinner as thou, though not in the same way. The devil has gins and snares, as well as traps. But penitence softened my impious heart, and then gratitude remoulded it. Therefore, seeing you penitent, I hope you can be grateful to Him, who has been more merciful to you than you have to your fellow creature. Daughter, the Church sends you comfort."

"Comfort to me? ah! never! unless it can raise my victim from the dead."

"Take this crucifix in thy hand, fix thine eyes on it, and listen to me," was all the reply.

"Yes, father; but let me thoroughly dry your feet first: 'tis ill sitting in wet feet: and you are the holiest man of all whose feet I have washed. I know it by your voice."

"Woman, I am not. As for my feet, they can wait their turn. Obey thou me!"

"Yes, father," said the lady, humbly. But with a woman's evasive pertinacity she wreathed one towel swiftly round the foot she was drying, and placed his other foot on the dry napkin; then obeyed his command.

And, as she bowed over the crucifix, the low, solemn tones of the friar fell upon her ear, and his words soon made her whole body quiver with various emotions, in quick succession.

"My daughter, he you murdered — in intent — was one Gerard, a Hollander. He loved a creature, as men should love none but their Redeemer and his Church. Heaven chastised him. A letter came to Rome. She was dead."

"Poor Gerard! Poor Margaret!" moaned the penitent.

Clement's voice faltered at this a moment. But soon, by a strong effort, he recovered all his calmness.

"His feeble nature yielded, body and soul, to the blow. He was stricken down with fever. He revived only to rebel against Heaven. He said, 'There is no God.'"

"Poor, poor Gerard!"

"Poor Gerard? thou feeble, foolish woman! Nay, wicked, impious Gerard. He plunged into vice, and soiled his eternal jewel: those you met him with were his daily companions: but know, rash creature, that the seeming woman you took to be his leman was but a boy, dressed in woman's habits to flout the others, a fair boy called Andrea. What that Andrea said to thee I know not; but be sure neither he, *nor any layman,* knows thy folly. This Gerard, rebel against Heaven, was no traitor to thee, unworthy."

The lady moaned like one in bodily agony, and the crucifix began to tremble in her trembling hands.

"Courage!" said Clement. "Comfort is at hand.

"From crime he fell into despair, and, bent on destroying his soul, he stood one night by Tiber, resolved on suicide. He saw one watching him. It was a bravo."

"Holy saints!"

"He begged the bravo to despatch him; he offered him all his money, to slay him body and soul. The bravo would not. Then this desperate sinner, not softened even by that refusal, flung himself into Tiber."

"Ah!"

"And the assassin saved his life. Thou hadst chosen for the task Lodovico, husband of Teresa, whom this Gerard had saved at sea, her and her infant child."

"He lives! he lives! he lives! I am faint."

The friar took the crucifix from her hands, fearing it

might fall. A shower of tears relieved her. The friar gave her time; then continued, calmly, "Ay, he lives; thanks to thee and thy wickedness, guided to his eternal good by an almighty and all-merciful hand. Thou art his greatest earthly benefactor."

"Where is he? where? where?"

"What is that to thee?"

"Only to see him alive. To beg him on my knees to forgive me. I swear to you I will never presume again to— How could I? He knows all. Oh, shame. Father, *does* he know?"

"All."

"Then never will I meet his eye; I should sink into the earth. But I would repair my crime. I would watch his life unseen. He shall rise in the world, whence I so nearly thrust him, poor soul; the Cæsare, my family, are all-powerful in Rome; and I am near their head."

"My daughter," said Clement, coldly, "he you call Gerard needs nothing man can do for him. Saved by a miracle from double death, he has left the world, and taken refuge from sin and folly in the bosom of the Church."

"A priest?"

"A priest, and a friar."

"A friar? Then you are not his confessor? Yet you know all. That gentle voice!"

She raised her head slowly, and peered at him through her mask.

The next moment she uttered a faint shriek, and lay with her brow upon his bare feet.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Clement sighed. He began to doubt whether he had taken the wisest course with a creature so passionate.

But young as he was, he had already learned many lessons of ecclesiastical wisdom. For one thing he had been taught to pause: *i.e.*, in certain difficulties, neither to do nor to say anything, until the matter should clear itself a little.

He therefore held his peace and prayed for wisdom.

All he did was gently to withdraw his foot.

But his penitent flung her arms round it with a piteous cry, and held it convulsively, and wept over it.

And now the agony of shame, as well as penitence, she was in, showed itself by the bright red that crept over her very throat, as she lay quivering at his feet.

"My daughter," said Clement, gently, "take courage. Torment thyself no more about this Gerard, who is not. As for me, I am Brother Clement, whom Heaven hath sent to thee this day to comfort thee, and help thee save thy soul. Thou hast made me thy confessor. I claim, then, thine obedience."

"Oh, yes," sobbed the penitent.

"Leave this pilgrimage, and instant return to Rome. Penitence abroad is little worth. There where we live lie the temptations we must defeat, or perish; not fly in search of others more showy, but less lethal. Easy to wash the feet of strangers, masked ourselves. Hard to be merely meek and charitable with those about us."

"I'll never, never, lay finger on her again."

"Nay, I speak not of servants only, but of dependents,

kinsmen, friends. This be thy penance; the last thing at night, and the first thing after matins, call to mind thy sin, and God his goodness; and so be humble and gentle to the faults of those around thee. The world it courts the rich; but seek thou the poor: not beggars; these for the most are neither honest nor truly poor. But rather find out those who blush to seek thee, yet need thee sore. Giving to them, shalt lend to heaven. Marry a good son of the Church."

"Me? I will never marry."

"Thou wilt marry within the year. I do entreat and command thee to marry one that feareth God; for thou art very clay. Mated ill, thou shalt be naught. But wedding a worthy husband thou mayest, *Dei gratiâ*, live a pious princess; ay, and die a saint."

"I?"

"Thou."

He then desired her to rise and go about the good work he had set her.

She rose to her knees, and, removing her mask, cast an eloquent look upon him, then lowered her eyes meekly.

"I will obey you as I would an angel. How happy I am, yet unhappy; for, oh, my heart tells me I shall never look on you again. I will not go till I have dried your feet."

"It needs not. I have excused thee this bootless penance."

"'Tis no penance to me. Ah! you do not forgive me, if you will not let me dry your poor feet."

"So be it, then," said Clement, resignedly; and thought to himself, "*Levius quid fœminâ.*"

But these weak creatures, that gravitate towards the small, as heavenly bodies towards the great, have yet their own flashes of angelic intelligence.

When the princess had dried the friar's feet, she looked at him with tears in her beautiful eyes, and murmured with singular tenderness and goodness, —

"I will have masses said for her soul. May I?" she added, timidly.

This brought a faint blush into the monk's cheek, and moistened his cold blue eye. It came so suddenly from one he was just rating so low.

"It is a gracious thought," he said. "Do as thou wilt: often such acts fall back on the doer like blessed dew. I am thy confessor, not hers; thine is the soul I must now do my all to save, or woe be to my own. My daughter, my dear daughter, I see good and ill angels fighting for thy soul this day, ay, this moment; oh, fight thou on thine own side. Dost thou remember all I bade thee?"

"Remember!" said the princess. "Sweet saint, each syllable of thine is graved in my heart."

"But one word more, then. Pray much to Christ, and little to His saints."

"I will."

"And that is the best word I have light to say to thee. So part we on it. Thou to the place becomes thee best, thy father's house: I to my holy mother's work."

"Adieu," faltered the princess. "Adieu thou that I have loved too well, hated too ill, known and revered too late; forgiving angel, adieu — forever."

The monk caught her words, though but faltered in a sigh.

"Forever?" he cried aloud, with sudden ardor. "Christians live 'forever,' and love 'forever,' but they never part 'forever.' They part, as part the earth and sun, to meet more brightly in a little while. You and I part here for life. And what is our life? One line in the great story of the Church, whose son and daughter we are; one handful in the sand of time, one drop in

the ocean of 'Forever.' Adieu — for the little moment called 'a life!' We part in trouble, we shall meet in peace: we part creatures of clay, we shall meet immortal spirits: we part in a world of sin and sorrow, we shall meet where all is purity and love divine; where no ill passions are, but Christ is, and his saints around Him clad in white. There, in the turning of an hour-glass, in the breaking of a bubble, in the passing of a cloud, she, and thou, and I, shall meet again; and sit at the feet of angels and archangels, apostles and saints, and beam like them with joy unspeakable, in the light of the shadow of God upon His throne, forever — and ever — and ever."

And so they parted. The monk erect, his eyes turned heavenwards and glowing with the sacred fire of zeal; the princess slowly retiring and turning more than once to cast a lingering glance of awe and tender regret on that inspired figure.

She went home subdued, and purified. Clement, in due course, reached Basle, and entered on his duties, teaching in the university, and preaching in the town and neighborhood. He led a life that can be comprised in two words; deep study and mortification. My reader has already a peep into his soul. At Basle he advanced in holy zeal and knowledge.

The brethren of his order began to see in him a descendant of the saints and martyrs.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE HEARTH.

When little Gerard was nearly three months old, a messenger came hot from Tergou for Catherine.

"Now just you go back," said she, "and tell them I can't come, and I won't: they have got Kate." So he departed, and Catherine continued her sentence: "There, child, I *must* go: they are all at sixes and sevens: this is the third time of asking; and to-morrow my man would come himself and take me home by the ear, with a flea in't." She then recapitulated her experiences of infants, and instructed Margaret what to do in each coming emergency, and pressed money upon her. Margaret declined it with thanks. Catherine insisted, and turned angry. Margaret made excuses all so reasonable that Catherine rejected them with calm contempt; to her mind they lacked femininity. "Come, out with your heart," said she; "and you and me parting; and mayhap shall never see one another's face again."

"Oh! mother, say not so."

"Alack, girl, I have seen it so often; 'twill come into my mind now at each parting. When I was your age, I never had such a thought. Nay, we were all to live forever then: so out wi' it."

"Well, then, mother — I would rather not have told you — your Cornelis must say to me, 'So you are come to share with us, eh, mistress?' those were his words. I told him I would be very sorry."

"Beshrew his ill tongue! What signifies it? He will never know."

"Most likely he would sooner or later. But, whether or no, I will take no grudged bounty from any family; unless I saw my child starving, and then Heaven only knows what I might do. Nay, mother, give me but thy love — I do prize that above silver, and they grudge me not that, by all I can find — for not a stiver of money will I take out of your house."

"You are a foolish lass. Why, were it me, I'd take it just to spite him."

"No, you would not. You and I are apples off one tree."

Catherine yielded with a good grace; and, when the actual parting came, embraces and tears burst forth on both sides.

When she was gone the child cried a good deal; and all attempts to pacify him failing, Margaret suspected a pin, and, searching between his clothes and his skin, found a gold angel incommoding his backbone.

"There, now, Gerard," said she to the babe; "I *thought* granny gave in rather *sudden*."

She took the coin and wrapped it in a piece of linen, and laid it at the bottom of her box, bidding the infant observe she could be at times as resolute as granny herself.

Catherine told Eli of Margaret's foolish pride, and how she had baffled it. Eli said Margaret was right, and she was wrong. Catherine tossed her head. Eli pondered.

Margaret was not without domestic anxieties. She had still two men to feed, and could not work so hard as she had done. She had enough to do to keep the house, and the child, and cook for them all. But she had a little money laid by, and she used to tell her child his father would be home to help them before it was spent. And with these bright hopes, and that treasury of bliss, her boy, she spent some happy months.

Time wore on: and no Gerard came; and, stranger still, no news of him.

Then her mind was disquieted, and, contrary to her nature, which was practical, she was often lost in sad reverie; and sighed in silence. And, while her heart was troubled, her money was melting. And so it was, that one day she found the cupboard empty, and looked in her dependents' faces; and, at the sight of them, her bosom was all pity; and she appealed to the baby whether she could let grandfather and poor old Martin want a meal; and went and took out Catherine's angel. As she unfolded the linen a tear of gentle mortification fell on it. She sent Martin out to change it. While he was gone a Frenchman came with one of the dealers in illuminated work, who had offered her so poor a price. He told her he was employed by his sovereign to collect masterpieces for her book of hours. Then she showed him the two best things she had; and he was charmed with one of them, viz., the flowers and raspberries and creeping things, which Margaret Van Eyck had shaded. He offered her an unheard-of price. "Nay, flout not my need, good stranger," said she: "three mouths there be in this house, and none to fill them but me."

Curious arithmetic! Left out No. 1.

"I flout thee not, fair mistress. My princess charged me strictly, 'Seek the best craftsmen; but I will no hard bargains; make them content with me, and me with them.'"

The next minute Margaret was on her knees kissing little Gerard in the cradle, and showering four gold pieces on him again and again, and relating the whole occurrence to him in very broken Dutch.

"And oh, what a good princess: wasn't she? We will pray for her, won't we, my lambkin; when we are old enough?"

Martin came in furious. "They will not change it. I trow they think I stole it."

"I am beholden to thee," said Margaret, hastily, and almost snatched it from Martin, and wrapped it up again, and restored it to its hiding-place.

Ere these unexpected funds were spent, she got to her ironing and starching again. In the midst of which Martin sickened; and died after an illness of nine days.

Nearly all her money went to bury him decently.

He was gone; and there was an empty chair by her fireside. For he had preferred the hearth to the sun as soon as the busybody was gone.

Margaret would not allow anybody to sit in this chair now. Yet whenever she let her eye dwell too long on it, vacant, it was sure to cost her a tear.

And now there was nobody to carry her linen home. To do it herself she must leave little Gerard in charge of a neighbor. But she dared not trust such a treasure to mortal; and besides she could not bear him out of her sight for hours and hours. So she set inquiries on foot for a boy to carry her basket on Saturday and Monday.

A plump, fresh-colored youth, called Luke Peterson, who looked fifteen, but was eighteen, came in, and blushing, and twiddling his bonnet, asked her if a man would not serve her turn as well as a boy.

Before he spoke she was saying to herself, "This boy will just do."

But she took the cue, and said, "Nay; but a man will maybe seek more than I can well pay."

"Not I," said Luke, warmly. "Why, Mistress Margaret, I am your neighbor, and I do very well at the coopering. I can carry your basket for you before or after my day's work, and welcome. You have no need

to pay *me* anything. 'Tisn't as if we were strangers, ye know."

"Why, Master Luke, I know your face, for that matter; but I cannot call to mind that ever a word passed between us."

"Oh yes, you did, Mistress Margaret. What, have you forgotten? One day you were trying to carry your baby and eke your pitcher full o' water: and quo' I, 'Give me the baby to carry.' 'Nay,' says you, 'I'll give you the pitcher, and keep the bairn myself:' and I carried the pitcher home, and you took it from me at this door, and you said to me, 'I am muckle obliged to you, young man,' with such a sweet voice; not like the folk in this street speak to a body."

"I do mind now, Master Luke; and methinks it was the least I could say."

"Well, Mistress Margaret, if you will say as much every time I carry your basket, I care not how often I bear it, nor how far."

"Nay, nay," said Margaret, coloring faintly. "I would not put upon good nature. You are young, Master Luke, and kindly. Say I give you your supper on Saturday night, when you bring the linen home, and your dawn-mete o' Monday; would that make us anyways even?"

"As you please; only say not I sought a couple o' diets, I, for such a trifle as yon."

With chubby-faced Luke's timely assistance, and the health and strength which Heaven gave this poor young woman, to balance her many ills, the house went pretty smoothly awhile. But the heart became more and more troubled by Gerard's long and now most mysterious silence.

And then that mental torturer, Suspense, began to tear her heavy heart with his hot pincers, till she cried

often and vehemently, "Oh, that I could know the worst."

While she was in this state, one day she heard a heavy step mount the stair. She started and trembled. "That is no step that I know; ill tidings?"

The door opened, and an unexpected visitor, Eli, came in, looking grave and kind.

Margaret eyed him in silence, and with increasing agitation.

"Girl," said he, "the skipper is come back."

"One word," gasped Margaret, "is he alive?"

"Surely, I hope so. No one has seen him dead."

"Then they must have seen him alive."

"No, girl; neither dead nor alive hath he been seen this many months in Rome. My daughter Kate thinks he is gone to some other city. She bade me tell you her thought."

"Ay, like enough," said Margaret, gloomily; "like enough. My poor babe!"

The old man in a faintish voice asked her for a morsel to eat: he had come fasting.

The poor thing pitied him with the surface of her agitated mind, and cooked a meal for him, trembling, and scarce knowing what she was about.

Ere he went he laid his hand upon her head, and said, "Be he alive, or be he dead, I look on thee as my daughter. Can I do nought for thee this day? Bethink thee now."

"Ay, old man. Pray for him; and for me!"

Eli sighed, and went sadly and heavily down the stairs.

She listened half stupidly to his retiring footsteps till they ceased. Then she sank moaning down by the cradle, and drew little Gerard tight to her bosom. "Oh, my poor fatherless boy; my fatherless boy!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Not long after this, as the little family at Tergou sat at dinner, Luke Peterson burst in on them, covered with dust. "Good people, Mistress Catherine is wanted instantly at Rotterdam."

"My name is Catherine, young man. Kate, it will be Margaret."

"Ay, dame, she said to me, 'Good Luke, hie thee to Tergou, and ask for Eli the hosier, and pray his wife Catherine to come to me, for God his love.' I didn't wait for daylight."

"Holy saints! He has come home, Kate. Nay, she would sure have said so. What on earth can it be?" And she heaped conjecture on conjecture.

"Mayhap the young man can tell us," hazarded Kate, timidly.

"That I can," said Luke. "Why, her babe is a-dying. And she was so wrapped up in it!"

Catherine started up: "What is his trouble?"

"Nay, I know not. But it has been peaking and pining worse and worse this while."

A furtive glance of satisfaction passed between Cornelis and Sybrandt. Luckily for them Catherine did not see it. Her face was turned towards her husband. "Now Eli," cried she, furiously, "if you say a word against it, you and I shall quarrel, after all these years."

"Who gainsays thee, foolish woman? Quarrel with your own shadow; while I go borrow Peter's mule for ye."

"Bless thee, my good man! Bless thee! Didst never

yet fail me at a pinch. Now eat your dinners who can, while I go and make ready."

She took Luke back with her in the cart, and, on the way, questioned and cross-questioned him, severely, and seductively, by turns, till she had turned his mind inside out, what there was of it.

Margaret met her at the door, pale and agitated, and threw her arms round her neck, and looked imploringly in her face.

"Come, he is alive, thank God," said Catherine, after scanning her eagerly.

She looked at the failing child, and then at the poor hollow-eyed mother, alternately. "Lucky you sent for me," said she. "The child is poisoned."

"Poisoned! by whom?"

"By you. You have been fretting."

"Nay, indeed, mother. How can I help fretting?"

"Don't tell me, Margaret. A nursing mother has no business to fret. She must turn her mind away from her grief to the comfort that lies in her lap. Know you not that the child pines if the mother vexes herself? This comes of your reading and writing. Those idle crafts befit a man; but they keep all useful knowledge out of a woman. The child must be weaned."

"Oh, you cruel woman," cried Margaret, vehemently; "I am sorry I sent for you. Would you rob me of the only bit of comfort I have in the world? A-nursing my Gerard, I forget I am the most unhappy creature beneath the sun."

"That you do not," was the retort, "or he would not be the way he is."

"Mother!" said Margaret, imploringly.

"'Tis hard," replied Catherine, relenting. "But bethink thee; would it not be harder to look down and see his lovely wee face a-looking up at you out of a little coffin?"

"O Jesu!"

"And how could you face your other troubles with your heart aye full, and your lap empty?"

"Oh, mother, I consent to anything. Only save my boy."

"That is a good lass. Trust to me! I do stand by, and see clearer than thou."

Unfortunately there was another consent to be gained; the babe's: and he was more refractory than his mother.

"There," said Margaret, trying to affect regret at his misbehavior; "he loves me too well."

But Catherine was a match for them both. As she came along she had observed a healthy young woman, sitting outside her own door, with an infant, hard by. She went and told her the case; and would she nurse the pining child for the nonce, till she had matters ready to wean him?

The young woman consented with a smile, and popped her child into the cradle, and came into Margaret's house. She dropped a courtesy, and Catherine put the child into her hands. She examined, and pitied it, and purred over it, and proceeded to nurse it, just as if it had been her own.

Margaret, who had been paralyzed at her assurance, cast a rueful look at Catherine, and burst out crying.

The visitor looked up. "What is to do? Wife, ye told me not the mother was unwilling."

"She is not: she is only a fool. Never heed her; and you, Margaret, I am ashamed of you."

"You are a cruel, hard-hearted woman," sobbed Margaret.

"Them as take in hand to guide the weak, need be hardish. And you will excuse me; but you are not my flesh and blood: and your boy is."

After giving this blunt speech time to sink, she added,

"Come now, she is robbing her own to save yours, and you can think of nothing better than bursting out a-blubbering in the woman's face. Out, fie, for shame!"

"Nay, wife," said the nurse. "Thank Heaven, I have enough for my own and for hers to boot. And prithee wyte not on her! Maybe the troubles o' life ha' soured her own milk."

"And her heart into the bargain," said the remorseless Catherine.

Margaret looked her full in the face; and down went her eyes.

"I know I ought to be very grateful to you," sobbed Margaret to the nurse: then turned her head and leaned away over the chair not to witness the intolerable sight of another nursing her Gerard, and Gerard drawing no distinction between this new mother, and her the banished one.

The nurse replied, "You are very welcome, my poor woman. And so are you, mistress Catherine, which are my townswoman, and know it not."

"What, are ye from Tergou? all the better. But I cannot call your face to mind."

"Oh, you know not me: my husband and me, we are very humble folk by you. But true Eli and his wife are known of all the town; and respected. So, I am at your call, dame; and at yours, wife; and yours, my pretty poppet; night or day."

"There's a woman of the right old sort," said Catherine, as the door closed upon her.

"I hate her. I hate her. I hate her," said Margaret with wonderful fervor.

Catherine only laughed at this outburst.

"That is right," said she, "better say it, as set sly and think it. It is very natural, after all. Come, here is your bundle o' comfort. Take and hate that; if ye can;" and she put the child in her lap.

"No, no;" said Margaret, turning her head half away from him; she could not for her life turn the other half. "He is not my child now; he is hers. I know not why she left him here, for my part. It was very good of her not to take him to her house, cradle and all; oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh!

"Ah! well, one comfort, *he* is not dead. This gives me light; some other woman has got him away from me; like father, like son; oh! oh! oh! oh! oh!"

Catherine was sorry for her, and let her cry in peace. And after that, when she wanted Joan's aid, she used to take Gerard out, to give him a little fresh air. Margaret never objected, nor expressed the least incredulity; but on their return was always in tears.

This connivance was short-lived. She was now altogether as eager to wean little Gerard. It was done; and he recovered health and vigor: and another trouble fell upon him directly: teething. But here Catherine's experience was invaluable: and now, in the midst of her grief and anxiety about the father, Margaret had moments of bliss, watching the son's tiny teeth come through. "Teeth, mother? I call them not teeth, but pearls of pearls." And each pearl that peeped and sparkled on his red gums, was to her the greatest feat nature had ever achieved.

Her companion partook the illusion. And, had we told them a field of standing corn was equally admirable, Margaret would have changed to a reproachful gazelle, and Catherine turned us out of doors; so each pearl's arrival was announced with a shriek of triumph by whichever of them was the fortunate discoverer.

Catherine gossiped with Joan and learned that she was the wife of Jorian Ketel of Tergou, who had been servant to Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, but fallen out of favor, and come back to Rotterdam, his native place. His friends

had got him the place of sexton to the parish, and what with that and carpentering he did pretty well.

Catherine told Joan in return whose child it was she had nursed, and all about Margaret and Gerard, and the deep anxiety his silence had plunged them in. "Ay," said Joan, "the world is full of trouble." One day she said to Catherine, "It's my belief my man knows more about your Gerard than anybody in these parts: but he has got to be closer than ever of late. Drop in some day just afore sunset, and set him talking. And, for our Lady's sake, say not I set you on. The only hiding he ever gave me was for babbling his business: and I do not want another. Gramercy! I married a man for the comfort of the thing, not to be hided."

Catherine dropped in. Jorian was ready enough to tell her how he had befriended her son and perhaps saved his life. But this was no news to Catherine: and the moment she began to cross-question him as to whether he could guess why her lost boy neither came, nor wrote, he cast a grim look at his wife, who received it with a calm air of stolid candor and innocent unconsciousness; and his answers became short and sullen. "What should he know more than another?" and so on. He added, after a pause, "Think you the burgomaster takes such as me into his secrets?"

"Oh, then the burgomaster knows something?" said Catherine, sharply.

"Likely. Who else should?"

"I'll ask him."

"I would."

"And tell him you say he knows."

"That is right, dame. Go make him mine enemy. That is what a poor fellow always gets if he says a word to you women." And Jorian from that moment shrunk in and became impenetrable as a hedgehog, and almost as prickly.

His conduct caused both the poor women agonies of mind; alarm, and irritated curiosity. Ghysbrecht was for some cause Gerard's mortal enemy; had stopped his marriage, imprisoned him, hunted him. And here was his late servant, who when off his guard had hinted that this enemy had the clew to Gerard's silence. After sifting Jorian's every word and look, all remained dark and mysterious. Then Catherine told Margaret to go herself to him. "You are young; you are fair. You will, maybe, get more out of him than I could."

The conjecture was a reasonable one.

Margaret went with her child in her arms and tapped timidly at Jorian's door just before sunset. "Come in," said a sturdy voice. She entered, and there sat Jorian by the fireside. At sight of her he rose, snorted, and burst out of the house. "Is that for me, wife?" inquired Margaret, turning very red.

"You must excuse him," replied Joan, rather coldly; "he lays it to your door that he is a poor man instead of a rich one. It is something about a piece of parchment. There was one a-missing, and he got nought from the burgomaster all along of that one."

"Alas! Gerard took it."

"Likely. But my man says you should not have let him: you were pledged to him to keep them all safe. And, sooth to say, I blame not my Jorian for being wroth. 'Tis hard for a poor man to be so near fortune and lose it by those he has befriended. However, I tell *him* another story. Says I, 'Folk that are out o' trouble, like you and me, didn't ought to be too hard on folk that are in trouble: and she has plenty.' Going already? What is all your hurry, mistress?"

"Oh, it is not for me to drive the good man out of his own house."

"Well, let me kiss the bairn afore ye go. He is not in fault any way, poor innocent."

Upon this cruel rebuff Margaret came to a resolution, which she did not confide even to Catherine.

After six weeks' stay that good woman returned home.

On the child's birthday, which occurred soon after, Margaret did no work: but put on her Sunday clothes, and took her boy in her arms and went to the church and prayed there long and fervently for Gerard's safe return.

That same day and hour Father Clement celebrated a mass and prayed for Margaret's departed soul in the minster church at Basle.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Some blackguard or other, I think it was Sybrandt, said, "A lie is not like a blow with a curtal axe."

True; for we can predict in some degree the consequences of a stroke with any material weapon. But a lie has no bounds at all. The nature of the thing is to ramify beyond human calculation.

Often in the every-day world a lie has cost a life, or laid waste two or three.

And so, in this story, what tremendous consequences of that one heartless falsehood!

Yet the tellers reaped little from it.

The brothers, who invented it merely to have one claimant the less for their father's property, saw little Gerard take their brother's place in their mother's heart. Nay, more, one day Eli openly proclaimed that, Gerard being lost, and probably dead, he had provided by will for little Gerard, and also for Margaret, his poor son's widow.

At this the look that passed between the black sheep was a caution to traitors. Cornelis had it on his lips to say Gerard was most likely alive. But he saw his mother looking at him, and checked himself in time.

Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, the other partner in that lie, was now a failing man. He saw the period fast approaching when all his wealth would drop from his body, and his misdeeds cling to his soul.

Too intelligent to deceive himself entirely, he had never been free from gusts of remorse. In taking Gerard's letter to Margaret he had compounded. "I

cannot give up land and money," said his giant Avarice. "I will cause her no unnecessary pain," said his dwarf Conscience.

So, after first tampering with the seal, and finding there was not a syllable about the deed, he took it to her with his own hand, and made a merit of it to himself; a set-off; and on a scale not uncommon where the self-accuser is the judge.

The birth of Margaret's child surprised and shocked him, and put his treacherous act in a new light. Should his letter take effect he should cause the dishonor of her, who was the daughter of one friend, the granddaughter of another, and whose land he was keeping from her too.

These thoughts preying on him at that period of life, when the strength of body decays, and the memory of old friends revives, filled him with gloomy horrors. Yet he was afraid to confess. For the curé was an honest man, and would have made him disgorge. And with him Avarice was an ingrained habit, Penitence only a sentiment.

Matters were thus when, one day, returning from the town hall to his own house, he found a woman waiting for him in the vestibule, with a child in her arms. She was veiled, and so, concluding she had something to be ashamed of, he addressed her magisterially. On this she let down her veil and looked him full in the face.

It was Margaret Brandt.

Her sudden appearance and manner startled him, and he could not conceal his confusion.

"Where is my Gerard?" cried she, her bosom heaving. "Is he alive?"

"For aught I know," stammered Ghysbrecht. "I hope so, for your sake. Prithee come into this room. The servants!"

"Not a step," said Margaret, and she took him by the shoulder, and held him with all the energy of an excited woman. "You know the secret of that which is breaking my heart. Why does not my Gerard come, nor send a line this many months? Answer me, or all the town is like to hear me; let alone thy servants. My misery is too great to be sported with."

In vain he persisted he knew nothing about Gerard. She told him those who had sent her to him told her another tale. "You do know why he neither comes nor sends," said she firmly.

At this Ghysbrecht turned paler and paler; but he summoned all his dignity, and said, "Would you believe those two knaves against a man of worship?"

"What two knaves?" said she keenly.

He stammered, "Said ye not? — There, I am a poor old broken man, whose memory is shaken. And you come here, and confuse me so. I know not what I say."

"Ay, sir, your memory *is* shaken, or sure you would not be my enemy. My father saved you from the plague, when none other would come anigh you, and was ever your friend. My grandfather Floris helped you in your early poverty, and loved you, man and boy. Three generations of us you have seen; and here is the fourth of us; this is your old friend Peter's grandchild, and your old friend Floris his great-grandchild. Look down on his innocent face, and think of theirs!"

"Woman, you torture me," sighed Ghysbrecht, and sank upon a bench. But she saw her advantage, and kneeled before him, and put the boy on his knees. "This fatherless babe is poor Margaret Brandt's, that never did you ill, and comes of a race that loved you. Nay, look at his face. 'Twill melt thee more than any word of mine. Saints of heaven, what can a poor desolate girl and her babe have done to wipe out all memory

of thine own young days, when thou wert guiltless as he is, that now looks up in thy face and implores thee to give him back his father?"

And with her arms under the child she held him up higher and higher, smiling under the old man's eyes.

He cast a wild look of anguish on the child, and another on the kneeling mother, and started up shrieking, "Avaunt, ye pair of adders!"

The stung soul gave the old limbs a momentary vigor, and he walked rapidly, wringing his hands and clutching at his white hair. "Forget those days? I forget all else. Oh, woman, woman, sleeping or waking I see but the faces of the dead, I hear but the voices of the dead, and I shall soon be among the dead. There, there, what is done is done. I am in hell. I am in hell."

And unnatural force ended in prostration.

He staggered, and but for Margaret would have fallen. With her one disengaged arm she supported him as well as she could, and cried for help.

A couple of servants came running, and carried him away in a state bordering on syncope. The last Margaret saw of him was his old furrowed face, white and helpless as his hair that hung down over the servant's elbow.

"Heaven forgive me," she said. "I doubt I have killed the poor old man."

Then this attempt to penetrate the torturing mystery left it as dark, or darker than before. For when she came to ponder every word, her suspicion was confirmed that Ghysbrecht did know something about Gerard. "And who were the two knaves he thought had done a good deed, and told me? Oh, my Gerard, my poor deserted babe, you and I are wading in deep waters."

The visit to Tergou took more money than she could well afford: and a customer ran away in her debt. She

was once more compelled to unfold Catherine's angel. But, strange to say, as she came down-stairs with it in her hand, she found some loose silver on the table, with a written line, "For Gerard his wyfe."

She fell with a cry of surprise on the writing; and soon it rose into a cry of joy.

"He is alive. He sends me this by some friendly hand."

She kissed the writing again and again, and put it in her bosom.

Time rolled on: and no news of Gerard.

And about every two months a small sum in silver found its way into the house. Sometimes it lay on the table. Once it was flung in through the bedroom window in a purse. Once it was at the bottom of Luke's basket. He had stopped at the public house to talk to a friend. The giver or his agent was never detected. Catherine disowned it. Margaret Van Eyck swore she had no hand in it. So did Eli. And Margaret, whenever it came, used to say to little Gerard, "Oh, my poor deserted child, you and I are wading in deep waters."

She applied at least half this modest, but useful supply, to dressing the little Gerard beyond his station in life. "If it does come from Gerard, he shall see his boy neat." All the mothers in the street began to sneer, especially such as had brats out at elbows.

The months rolled on, and dead sickness of heart succeeded to these keener torments. She returned to her first thought: "Gerard must be dead. She should never see her boy's father again, nor her marriage lines." This last grief, which had been somewhat allayed by Eli and Catherine recognizing her betrothal, now revived in full force; others would not look so favorably on her story. And often she moaned over her boy's illegitimacy. "Is it not enough for us to be bereaved? Must

we be dishonored too? Oh, that we had ne'er been born."

A change took place in Peter Brandt. His mind, clouded for nearly two years, seemed now to be clearing; he had intervals of intelligence; and then he and Margaret used to talk of Gerard, till he wandered again. But one day, returning after an absence of some hours, Margaret found him conversing with Catherine, in a way he had never done since his paralytic stroke. "Ah, girl, why must you be out?" said she. "But indeed I have told him all; and we have been a-crying together over thy troubles."

Margaret stood silent, looking joyfully from one to the other.

Peter smiled on her, and said, "Come, let me bless thee."

She kneeled at his feet, and he blessed her most eloquently. He told her she had been all her life the lovingest, truest, and most obedient daughter Heaven ever sent to a poor old widowed man. "May thy son be to thee what thou hast been to me!"

After this he dozed. Then the females whispered together: and Catherine said, "All our talk e'en now was of Gerard. It lies heavy on his mind. His poor head must often have listened to us when it seemed quite dark. Margaret, he is a very understanding man; he thought of many things: 'He may be in prison,' says he, 'or forced to go fighting for some king, or sent to Constantinople to copy books there, or gone into the Church after all.' He had a bent that way."

"Ah, mother," whispered Margaret, in reply, "he doth but deceive himself as we do."

Ere she could finish the sentence, a strange interruption occurred.

A loud voice cried out, "I see him. I see him."

And the old man with dilating eyes seemed to be looking right through the wall of the house.

"In a boat; on a great river; coming this way. Sore disfigured: but I knew him. Gone! gone! all dark."

And he sank back, and asked feebly where was Margaret.

"Dear father, I am by thy side. Oh, mother! mother, what is this?"

"I cannot see thee, and but a moment agone I saw all round the world. Ay, ay. Well, I am ready. Is this thy hand? Bless thee, my child, bless thee! Weep not! The tree is ripe."

The old physician read the signs aright. These calm words were his last. The next moment he drooped his head, and gently, placidly, drifted away from earth, like an infant sinking to rest. The torch had flashed up, before going out.

CHAPTER XXX.

She who had wept for poor old Martin was not likely to bear this blow so stoically as the death of the old is apt to be borne. In vain Catherine tried to console her with commonplaces; in vain told her it was a happy release for him; and that, as he himself had said, the tree was ripe. But her worst failure was, when she urged that there were now but two mouths to feed: and one care the less.

"Such cares are all the joys I have," said Margaret. "They fill my desolate heart, which now seems void as well as waste. Oh, empty chair, my bosom it aches to see thee. Poor old man, how could I love him by halves, I that did use to sit and look at him and think 'But for me thou wouldst die of hunger.' He, so wise, so learned erst, was got to be helpless as my own sweet babe, and I loved him as if he had been my child instead of my father. Oh, empty chair! Oh, empty heart! Well-a-day! well-a-day!"

And the pious tears would not be denied.

Then Catherine held her peace: and hung her head. And one day she made this confession, "I speak to thee out o' my head, and not out o' my bosom; thou dost well to be deaf to me. Were I in thy place I should mourn the old man all one as thou dost."

Then Margaret embraced her, and this bit of true sympathy did her a little good. The commonplaces did none.

Then Catherine's bowels yearned over her, and she said, "My poor girl, you were not born to live alone. I

have got to look on you as my own daughter. Waste not thine youth upon my son Gerard. Either he is dead, or he is a traitor. It cuts my heart to say it; but who can help seeing it? Thy father is gone; and I cannot always be aside thee. And here is an honest lad that loves thee well this many a day. I'd take him and comfort together. Heaven hath sent us these creatures to torment us and comfort us and all; we are just nothing in the world without 'em." Then seeing Margaret look utterly perplexed, she went on to say, "Why, sure you are not so blind as not to see it?"

"What? Who?"

"Who but this Luke Peterson?"

"What, our Luke? The boy that carries my basket?"

"Nay, he is over nineteen, and a fine, healthy lad; and I have made inquiries for you; and they all do say he is a capable workman, and never touches a drop; and that is much in a Rotterdam lad, which they are mostly half man half sponge."

Margaret smiled for the first time this many days. "Luke loves dried puddings dearly," said she; "and I make them to his mind. 'Tis them he comes a-courting here." Then she suddenly turned red. "But if I thought he came after your son's wife that is, or ought to be, I'd soon put him to the door."

"Nay, nay; for Heaven's sake let me not make mischief. Poor lad! Why, girl, fancy will not be bridled. Bless you, I wormed it out of him near a twelvemonth agone."

"O mother! and you *let* him?"

"Well, I thought of you. I said to myself, 'If he is fool enough to be her slave for nothing, all the better for her. A lone woman is lost without a man about her to fetch and carry her little matters.' But now my mind is changed, and I think the best use you can put him to, is to marry him."

"So then his own mother is against him, and would wed me to the first comer. Ah, Gerard, thou hast but me; I will not believe thee dead till I see thy tomb, nor false till I see thee with another lover in thine hand. Foolish boy, I shall ne'er be civil to him again."

Afflicted with the busybody's protection, Luke Peterson met a cold reception in the house where he had hitherto found a gentle and kind one. And by-and-by, finding himself very little spoken to at all, and then sharply and irritably, the great soft fellow fell to whimpering, and asked Margaret plump if he had done anything to offend her.

"Nothing. I am to blame. I am cursed. If you will take my counsel you will keep out of my way awhile."

"It is all along of me, Luke," said the busybody.

"You, Mistress Catherine. Why, what have I done for you to set her against me?"

"Nay, I meant all for the best. I told her I saw you were looking towards her through a wedding-ring. But she won't hear of it."

"There was no need to tell her that, wife, she knows I am courting her this twelvemonth."

"Not I," said Margaret: "or I should never have opened the street door to you."

"Why, I come here every Saturday night. And that is how the lads in Rotterdam do court. If we sup with a lass o' Saturdays, that's wooing."

"Oh, that is Rotterdam, is it? Then next time you come, let it be Thursday, or Friday. For my part, I thought you came after my puddings, boy."

"I like your puddings well enough. You make them better than mother does. But I like you still better than the puddings," said Luke, tenderly.

"Then you have seen the last of them. How dare you talk so to another man's wife, and him far away?" She

ended gently, but very firmly, "You need not trouble yourself to come here any more, Luke; I can carry my basket myself."

"Oh, very well," said Luke; and, after sitting silent and stupid for a little while, he rose, and said sadly to Catherine, "Dame, I dare say I have got the sack;" and went out.

But the next Saturday Catherine found him seated on the door-step blubbering. He told her he had got used to come there, and every other place seemed strange. She went in, and told Margaret; and Margaret sighed, and said, "Poor Luke, he might come in for her, if he could know his place, and treat her like a married wife." On this being communicated to Luke, he hesitated. "Pshaw!" said Catherine, "promises are pie-crusts. Promise her all the world, sooner than sit outside like a fool, when a word will carry you inside. Now you humor her in everything, and then, if poor Gerard come not home and claim her, you will be sure to have her — in time. A lone woman is aye to be tired out, thou foolish boy."

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE CLOISTER.

Brother Clement had taught and preached in Basle more than a twelvemonth, when one day Jerome stood before him, dusty, with a triumphant glance in his eye.

"Give the glory to God, brother Clement; thou canst now wend to England with me."

"I am ready, brother Jerome; and, expecting thee these many months, have in the intervals of teaching and devotion studied the English tongue somewhat closely."

"'Twas well thought of," said Jerome. He then told him he had but delayed till he could obtain extraordinary powers from the Pope to collect money for the Church's use in England, and to hear confession in all the secular monasteries. "So now gird up thy loins, and let us go forth and deal a good blow for the Church, and against the Franciscans."

The two friars went preaching down the Rhine, for England. In the larger places, they both preached. At the smaller, they often divided, and took different sides of the river, and met again at some appointed spot. Both were able orators, but in different styles.

Jerome's was noble and impressive, but a little contracted in religious topics, and a trifle monotonous in delivery compared with Clement's, though in truth not so, compared with most preachers.

Clement's was full of variety, and often remarkably colloquial. In its general flow, tender and gently win-

ning, it curled round the reason and the heart. But it always rose with the rising thought; and so at times Clement soared as far above Jerome as his level speaking was below him. Indeed, in these noble heats he was all that we have read of inspired prophet or heathen orator: *Vehemens ut procella, excitatus ut torrens, incensus ut fulmen, tonabat, fulgurabat, et rapidis eloquentiæ fluctibus cuncta proruebat et porturbabat.*

I would give literal specimens, but for five objections: it is difficult; time is short; I have done it elsewhere; an able imitator has since done it better; and similarity, a virtue in peas, is a vice in books.

But (not to evade the matter entirely) Clement used secretly to try and learn the recent events and the besetting sin of each town he was to preach in.

But Jerome, the unbending, scorned to go out of his way for any people's vices. At one great town some leagues from the Rhine, they mounted the same pulpit in turn. Jerome preached against vanity in dress, a favorite theme of his. He was eloquent and satirical, and the people listened with complacency. It was a vice that they were little given to.

Clement preached against drunkenness. It was a besetting sin, and sacred from preaching in these parts: for the clergy themselves were infected with it, and popular prejudice protected it. Clement dealt it merciless blows out of Holy Writ and worldly experience. A crime itself, it was the nursing-mother of most crimes, especially theft and murder. He reminded them of a parricide that had lately been committed in their town by an honest man in liquor; and also how a band of drunkards had roasted one of their own comrades alive at a neighboring village. "Your last prince," said he, "is reported to have died of apoplexy, but well you know he died of drink; and of your aldermen, one per-

ished miserably last month dead drunk, suffocated in a puddle. Your children's backs go bare that you may fill your bellies with that which makes you the worst of beasts, silly as calves, yet fierce as boars; and drives your families to need, and your souls to hell. I tell ye your town, ay, and your very nation would sink to the very bottom of mankind did your women drink as you do. And how long will they be temperate, and, contrary to nature, resist the example of their husbands and fathers? Vice ne'er yet stood still. Ye must amend yourselves, or see them come down to your mark. Already in Bohemia they drink along with the men. How shows a drunken woman? Would you love to see your wives drunken, your mothers drunken?" At this there was a shout of horror, for mediæval audiences had not learned to sit mumchance at a moving sermon. "Ah, that comes home to you," cried the friar. "What! madmen! think you it doth not more shock the all-pure God to see a man, His noblest work, turned to a drunken beast, than it can shock you creatures of sin and unreason to see a woman turned into a thing no better nor worse than yourselves?"

He ended with two pictures; a drunkard's house and family, and a sober man's; both so true and dramatic in all their details, that the wives fell all to "ohing" and "ahing," and "Eh, but that is a true word."

This discourse caused quite an uproar. The hearers formed knots; the men were indignant; so the women flattered them, and took their part openly against the preacher. A married man had a right to a drop; he needed it, working for all the family. And for their part they did not care to change their men for milksops.

The double faces! That very evening a band of men caught near a hundred of them round brother Clement, filling his wallet with the best, and offering him the very

roses off their heads, and kissing his frock, and blessing him "for taking in hand to mend their sots."

Jerome thought this sermon too earthly.

"Drunkenness is not heresy, Clement, that a whole sermon should be preached against it."

As they went on, he found to his surprise that Clement's sermons sank into his hearers deeper than his own; made them listen, think, cry, and sometimes even amend their ways. "He hath the art of sinking to their peg," thought Jerome. "Yet he can soar high enough at times."

Upon the whole, it puzzled Jerome, who had a secret sense of superiority to his tenderer brother. And, after about two hundred miles of it, it got to displease him as well as puzzle him. But he tried to check this sentiment as petty and unworthy. "Souls differ like locks," said he, "and preachers must differ like keys, or the fewer should the Church open for God to pass in. And, certes, this novice hath the key to these Northern souls, being himself a Northern man."

And so they came slowly down the Rhine, sometimes drifting a few miles on the stream; but in general walking by the banks preaching, and teaching, and confessing sinners in the towns and villages; and they reached the town of Dusseldorf.

There was the little quay where Gerard and Denys had taken boat up the Rhine. The friars landed on it. There were the streets, there was "The Silver Lion." Nothing had changed but he, who walked through it barefoot, with his heart calm and cold, his hands across his breast, and his eyes bent meekly on the ground, a true son of Dominic and holy Church.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE HEARTH.

"Eli," said Catherine, "answer me one question like a man, and I'll ask no more to-day. What is wormwood?"

Eli looked a little helpless at this sudden demand upon his faculties; but soon recovered enough to say it was something that tasted main bitter.

"That is a fair answer, my man, but not the one I look for."

"Then answer it yourself."

"And shall. Wormwood is—to have two in the house a-doing nought, but waiting for thy shoes and mine." Eli groaned. The shaft struck home.

"Methinks waiting for their best friend's coffin, that and nothing to do, are enow to make them worse than Nature meant. Why not set them up somewhere, to give 'em a chance?"

Eli said he was willing, but afraid they would drink and gamble their very shelves away.

"Nay," said Catherine. "Dost take me for a simpleton? Of course I mean to watch them at starting, and drive them wi' a loose rein, as the saying is."

"Where did you think of? Not here; to divide our own custom."

"Not likely. I say Rotterdam, against the world. Then I could start them."

Oh, self deception! The true motive of all this was to get near little Gerard.

After many discussions, and eager promises of amend ment on these terms from Cornelis and Sybrandt, Catherine went to Rotterdam shop hunting, and took Kate with her, for a change. They soon found one, and in a good street; but it was sadly out of order. However they got it cheaper for that, and instantly set about brushing it up, fitting proper shelves for the business, and making the dwelling-house habitable.

Luke Peterson was always asking Margaret what he could do for her. The answer used to be in a sad tone, "Nothing, Luke, nothing."

"What, you that are so clever, can you think of nothing for me to do for you?"

"Nothing, Luke, nothing."

But at last she varied the reply thus: "If you could make something to help my sweet sister Kate about."

The slave of love consented joyfully, and soon made Kate a little cart, and cushioned it, and yoked himself into it, and at eventide drew her out of the town, and along the pleasant boulevard, with Margaret and Catherine walking beside. It looked a happier party than it was.

Kate, for one, enjoyed it keenly, for little Gerard was put in her lap, and she doted on him; and it was like a cherub carried by a little angel, or a rosebud lying in the cup of a lily.

So the vulgar jeered, and asked Luke how a thistle tasted, and if his mistress could not afford one with four legs, etc.

Luke did not mind these jeers; but Kate minded them for him.

"Thou hast made the cart for me, good Luke," said she. "'Twas much. I did ill to let thee draw me too; we can afford to pay some poor soul for that. I love my rides, and to carry little Gerard; but I'd liever ride no more than thou be mocked for't."

"Much I care for their tongues," said Luke; "if I did care I'd knock their heads together. I shall draw you till my mistress says give over."

"Luke, if you obey Kate, you will oblige me."

"Then I will obey Kate."

An honorable exception to popular humor was Jorian Ketel's wife. "That is strength well laid out, to draw the weak. And her prayers will be your guerdon; she is not long for this world: she smileth in pain." These were the words of Joan.

Single-minded Luke answered that he did not want the poor lass's prayers; he did it to please his mistress, Margaret.

After that Luke often pressed Margaret to give him something to do — without success.

But one day, as if tired with his importuning, she turned on him, and said with a look and accent, I should in vain try to convey —

"Find me my boy's father!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"Mistress, they all say he is dead."

"Not so. They feed me still with hopes."

"Ay, to your face, but behind your back they all say he is dead."

At this revelation Margaret's tears began to flow.

Luke whimpered for company. He had the body of a man, but the heart of a girl.

"Prithee, weep not so, sweet mistress," said he. "I'd bring him back to life, an I could, rather than see thee weep so sore."

Margaret said she thought she was weeping because they were so double-tongued with her.

She recovered herself, and, laying her hand on his shoulder, said solemnly, "Luke, he is not dead. Dying men are known to have a strange sight. And listen, Luke! My poor father, when he was a-dying, and I, simple fool, was so happy, thinking he was going to get well altogether, he said to mother and me — he was sitting in that very chair where you are now, and mother was as might be here, and I was yonder making a sleeve — said he, 'I see him! I see him!' Just so. Not like a failing man at all, but all o' fire. 'Sore disfigured — on a great river — coming this way.'

"Ah, Luke, if you were a woman, and had the feeling for me you think you have, you would pity me, and find him for me. Take a thought! The father of my child!"

"Alack, I would if I knew how," said Luke. "But how can I?"

"Nay, of course you cannot. I am mad to think it.

But oh, if any one really cared for me they *would;* that is all I know."

Luke reflected in silence for some time.

"The old folk all say dying men can see more than living wights. Let me think, for my mind cannot gallop like thine. On a great river! Well, the Maas is a great river." He pondered on.

"Coming this way? Then if it was the Maas, he would have been here by this time, so 'tis not the Maas. The Rhine is a great river, greater than the Maas, and very long. I think it will be the Rhine."

"And so do I, Luke; for Denys bade him come down the Rhine. But even if it is, he may turn off before he comes anigh his birthplace. He does not pine for me as I for him, that is clear. Luke, do you not think he has deserted me?" She wanted him to contradict her; but he said, "It looks very like it; what a fool he must be!"

"What do we know?" objected Margaret, imploringly.

"Let me think again," said Luke. "I cannot gallop."

The result of this meditation was this. He knew a station about sixty miles up the Rhine, where all the public boats put in; and he would go to that station, and try and cut the truant off. To be sure he did not even know him by sight; but as each boat came in he would mingle with the passengers, and ask if one Gerard was there. "And, mistress, if you were to give me a bit of a letter to him; for, with us being strangers, mayhap a won't believe a word I say."

"Good, kind, thoughtful Luke, I will (how I have undervalued thee!). But give me till supper-time to get it writ." At supper she put a letter into his hand with a blush; it was a long letter tied round with silk, after the fashion of the day, and sealed over the knot.

Luke weighed it in his hand, with a shade of discon-

tent, and said to her very gravely, "Say your father was not dreaming, and say I have the luck to fall in with this man, and say he should turn out a better bit of stuff than I think him, and come home to you then and there — what is to become o' me?"

Margaret colored to her very brow. "O Luke, Heaven will reward thee. And I shall fall on my knees and bless thee; and I shall love thee all my days, sweet Luke, as a mother does her son. I am so old by thee: trouble ages the heart. Thou shalt not go: 'tis not fair of me; love maketh us to be all self."

"Humph!" said Luke. "And if," resumed he, in the same grave way, "yon scapegrace shall read thy letter, and hear me tell him how thou pinest for him, and yet, being a traitor, or a mere idiot, will not turn to thee — what shall become of me then? Must I die a bachelor, and thou fare lonely to thy grave, neither maid, wife, nor widow?"

Margaret panted with fear and emotion at this terrible piece of good sense, and the plain question that followed it. But at last she faltered out, "If, which our Lady be merciful to me, and forbid — Oh!"

"Well, mistress?"

"If he should read my letter, and hear thy words — and, sweet Luke, be just and tell him what a lovely babe he hath, fatherless, fatherless. O Luke, can he be so cruel?"

"I trow not; but if?"

"Then he will give thee up my marriage lines, and I shall be an honest woman, and a wretched one; and my boy will not be a bastard; and, of course, then we *could* both go into any honest man's house that would be troubled with us; and even for thy goodness this day, I will — I will — ne'er be so ungrateful as go past thy door to another man's."

"Ay, but will you come in at mine? Answer me that!"

"Oh, ask me not! Some day, perhaps, when my wounds leave bleeding. Alas, I'll try. If I don't fling myself and my child into the Maas. Do not go, Luke! do not think of going. 'Tis all madness from first to last."

But Luke was as slow to forego an idea as to form one.

His reply showed how fast love was making a man of him. "Well," said he, "madness is something any way; and I am tired of doing nothing for thee: and I am no great talker. To-morrow, at peep of day, I start. But, hold, I have no money. My mother, she takes care of all mine; and I ne'er see it again."

Then Margaret took out Catherine's gold angel, which had escaped so often, and gave it to Luke; and he set out on his mad errand.

It did not however seem so mad to him as to us. It was a superstitious age; and Luke acted on the dying man's dream, or vision, or illusion, or whatever it was, much as we should act on respectable information.

But Catherine was downright angry when she heard of it. To send the poor lad on such a wild-goose chase! "But you are like a many more girls; and, mark my words, by the time you have worn that Luke fairly out, and made him as sick of you as a dog, you will turn as fond on him as a cow on a calf, and 'Too late' will be the cry."

THE CLOISTER.

The two friars reached Holland from the south just twelve hours after Luke started up the Rhine.

Thus, wild-goose chase or not, the parties were nearing each other, and rapidly too. For Jerome, unable to preach in low Dutch, now began to push on towards the coast, anxious to get to England as soon as possible.

And, having the stream with them, the friars would in point of fact have missed Luke by passing him in full stream below his station, but for the incident which I am about to relate.

About twenty miles above the station Luke was making for, Clement landed to preach in a large village; and towards the end of his sermon he noticed a gray nun weeping.

He spoke to her kindly, and asked her what was her grief. "Nay," said she, "'tis not for myself flow these tears; 'tis for my lost friend. Thy words reminded me of what she was, and what she is, poor wretch. But you are a Dominican, and I am a Franciscan nun."

"It matters little, my sister, if we are both Christians, and if I can aid thee in aught."

The nun looked in his face, and said, "These are strange words, but methinks they are good; and thy lips are, oh, most eloquent. I will tell thee our grief."

She then let him know that a young nun, the darling of the convent, and her bosom friend, had been lured away from her vows, and, after various gradations of sin, was actually living in a small inn as chambermaid, in reality as a decoy, and was known to be selling her favors to the wealthier customers. She added, "Anywhere else we might by kindly violence force her away from perdition. But this innkeeper was the servant of the fierce baron on the height there, and hath his ear still, and he would burn our convent to the ground, were we to take her by force."

"Moreover, souls will not be saved by brute force," said Clement.

While they were talking Jerome came up, and Clement persuaded him to lie at the convent that night. But when in the morning Clement told him he had had a long talk with the abbess, and that she was very sad, and

he had promised her to try and win back her nun, Jerome objected, and said, "It was not their business, and was a waste of time." Clement, however, was no longer a mere pupil. He stood firm, and at last they agreed that Jerome should go forward, and secure their passage in the next ship for England, and Clement be allowed time to make his well-meant but idle experiment.

About ten o'clock that day, a figure in a horseman's cloak, and great boots to match, and a large flapping felt hat, stood like a statue near the *auberge*, where was the apostate nun, Mary. The friar thus disguised was at that moment truly wretched. These ardent natures undertake wonders; but are dashed when they come hand to hand with the sickening difficulties. But then, as their hearts are steel, though their nerves are anything but iron, they turn not back, but panting and dispirited, struggle on to the last.

Clement hesitated long at the door, prayed for help and wisdom, and at last entered the inn and sat down faint at heart, and with his body in a cold perspiration.

But outside he was another man. He called lustily for a cup of wine: it was brought him by the landlord. He paid for it with money the convent had supplied him: and made a show of drinking it.

"Landlord," said he, "I hear there is a fair chamber-maid in thine house."

"Ay, stranger, the buxomest in Holland. But she gives not her company to all comers; only to good customers."

Friar Clement dangled a massive gold chain in the landlord's sight. He laughed and shouted, "Here, Janet, here is a lover for thee would bind thee in chains of gold: and a tall lad into the bargain I promise thee."

"Then I am in double luck," said a female voice: "send him hither."

Clement rose, shuddered, and passed into the room, where Janet was seated playing with a piece of work, and laying it down every minute, to sing a mutilated fragment of a song. For, in her mode of life, she had not the patience to carry anything out.

After a few words of greeting, the disguised visitor asked her if they could not be more private somewhere.

"Why not?" said she. And she rose and smiled, and went tripping before him. He followed, groaning inwardly, and sore perplexed.

"There," said she. "Have no fear! Nobody ever comes here, but such as pay for the privilege."

Clement looked round the room, and prayed silently for wisdom. Then he went softly, and closed the window-shutters carefully.

"What on earth is that for?" said Janet in some uneasiness.

"Sweetheart," whispered the visitor, with a mysterious air, "it is that God may not see us."

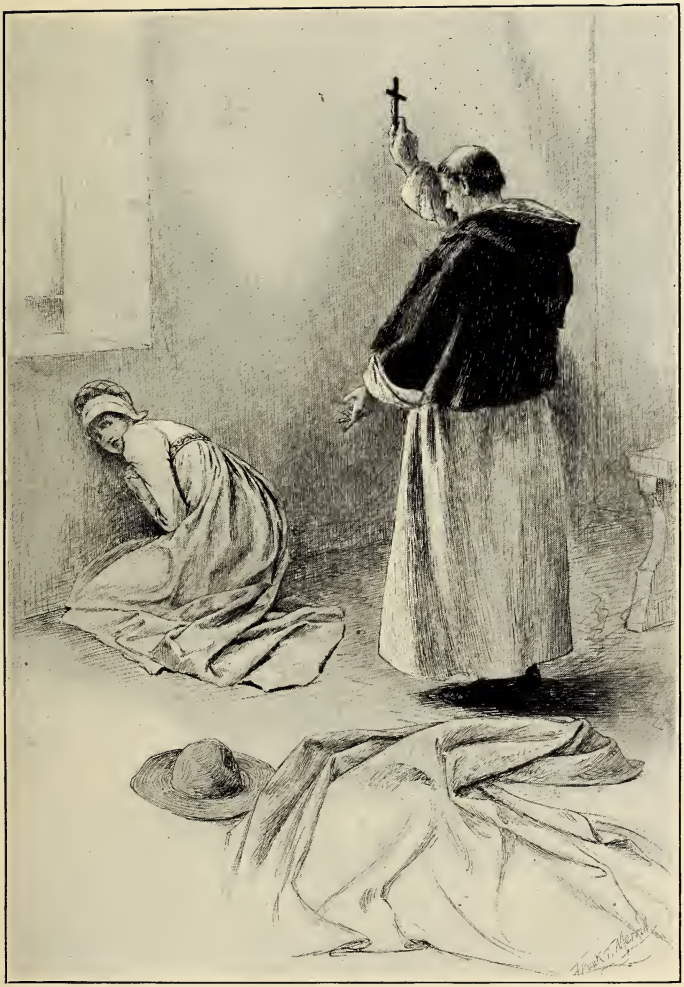
"Madman," said Janet, "think you a wooden shutter can keep out His eye?"

"Nay, I know not. Perchance He has too much on hand to notice *us*. But I would not the saints and angels should see us. Would you?"

"My poor soul, hope not to escape their sight! The only way is not to think of them; for if you do, it poisons your cup. For two pins I'd run and leave thee. Art pleasant company in sooth."

"After all, girl, so that men see us not, what signify God and the saints seeing us? Feel this chain! 'Tis virgin gold. I shall cut two of these heavy links off for thee."

"Ah! now thy discourse is to the point." And she handled the chain greedily. "Why, 'tis as massy as the chain round the Virgin's neck at the conv—" She did not finish the word.



HELD HIS CRUCIFIX TOWERING OVER HER.

"Whisht! whisht! whisht! 'Tis *it*. And thou shalt have thy share. But betray me not."

"Monster!" cried Janet, drawing back from him with repugnance, "what! rob the blessed Virgin of her chain, and give it to an" —

"You are none," cried Clement, exultingly, "or you had not recked for that. — Mary!"

"Ah, ah, ah!"

"Thy patron saint, whose chain this is, sends me to greet thee."

She ran screaming to the window and began to undo the shutters.

Her fingers trembled, and Clement had time to debarrass himself of his boots and his hat, before the light streamed in upon him. He then let his cloak quietly fall, and stood before her, a Dominican friar, calm and majestic as a statue, and held his crucifix towering over her with a loving, sad and solemn look, that somehow relieved her of the physical part of fear, but crushed her with religious terror and remorse. She crouched and cowered against the wall.

"Mary," said he, gently; "one word! Are you happy?"

"As happy as I shall be in hell."

"And they are not happy at the convent; they weep for you."

"For me?"

"Day and night; above all the Sister Ursula."

"Poor Ursula!" And the strayed nun began to weep herself at the thought of her friend.

"The angels weep still more. Wilt not dry all their tears in earth and heaven, and save thyself?"

"Ah! would I could: but it is too late."

"Satan avaunt," cried the monk sternly. "'Tis thy favorite temptation; and thou, Mary, listen not to the

enemy of man, belying God, and whispering despair. I who come to save thee have been a far greater sinner than thou. Come, Mary, sin, thou seest, is not so sweet e'en in this world, as holiness; and eternity is at the door."

"How can they ever receive me again?"

"'Tis their worthiness thou doubtest now. But in truth they pine for thee. 'Twas in pity of their tears that I, a Dominican, undertook this task; and broke the rule of my order by entering an inn; and broke it again by donning these lay vestments. But all is well done, and quit for a light penance, if thou wilt let us rescue thy soul from this den of wolves, and bring thee back to thy vows."

The nun gazed at him with tears in her eyes. "And thou a Dominican hast done this for a daughter of St. Francis! Why, the Franciscans and Dominicans hate one another."

"Ay, my daughter; but Francis and Dominic love one another."

The recreant nun seemed struck and affected by this answer.

Clement now reminded her how shocked she had been that the Virgin should be robbed of her chain. "But see now," said he, "the convent and the Virgin too think ten times more of their poor nun than of golden chains; for they freely trusted their chain to me a stranger, that peradventure the sight of it might touch their lost Mary and remind her of their love." Finally he showed her with such terrible simplicity the end of her present course, and on the other hand so revived her dormant memories and better feelings, that she kneeled sobbing at his feet, and owned she had never known happiness nor peace since she betrayed her vows; and said she would go back if he would go with her; but alone

she dared not, could not: even if she reached the gate she could never enter. How could she face the abbess and the sisters? He told her he would go with her as joyfully as the shepherd bears a strayed lamb to the fold.

But when he urged her to go at once, up sprung a crop of those prodigiously petty difficulties that entangle her sex, like silken nets, liker iron cobwebs.

He quietly swept them aside.

"But how can I walk beside thee in this habit?"

"I have brought the gown and cowl of thy holy order. Hide thy bravery with them. And leave thy shoes as I leave these" (pointing to his horseman's boots).

She collected her jewels and ornaments.

"What are these for?" inquired Clement.

"To present to the convent, father."

"Their source is too impure."

"But," objected the penitent, "it would be a sin to leave them here. They can be sold to feed the poor."

"Mary, fix thine eye on this crucifix, and trample those devilish baubles beneath thy feet."

She hesitated; but soon threw them down and trampled on them.

"Now open the window and fling them out on that dung-hill. 'Tis well done. So pass the wages of sin from thy hands, its glittering yoke from thy neck, its pollution from thy soul. Away, daughter of St. Francis, we tarry in this vile place too long." She followed him.

But they were not clear yet.

At first the landlord was so astounded at seeing a black friar and a gray nun pass through his kitchen from the inside, that he gaped, and muttered, "Why, what mummery is this?" But he soon comprehended the matter, and whipped in between the fugitives and the door. "What, ho! Reuben! Carl! Gavin! here is a false friar spiriting away our Janet."

The men came running in with threatening looks. The friar rushed at them crucifix in hand. "Forbear," he cried, in a stentorian voice. "She is a holy nun returning to her vows. The hand that touches her cowl, or her robe, to stay her, it shall wither, his body shall lie unburied, cursed by Rome, and his soul shall roast in eternal fire." They shrank back as if a flame had met them. "And thou — miserable panderer!" —

He did not end the sentence in words, but seized the man by the neck, and, strong as a lion in his moments of hot excitement, whirled him furiously from the door and sent him all across the room, pitching headforemost on to the stone floor; then tore the door open and carried the screaming nun out into the road. "Hush! poor trembler," he gasped; "they dare not molest thee on the high road. Away!"

The landlord lay terrified, half stunned, and bleeding: and Mary, though she often looked back apprehensively, saw no more of him.

On the road he bade her observe his impetuosity.

"Hitherto," said he, "we have spoken of thy faults: now for mine. My choler is ungovernable; furious. It is by the grace of God I am not a murderer. I repent the next moment; but a moment too late is all too late. Mary, had the churls laid finger on thee, I should have scattered their brains with my crucifix. Oh, I know myself; go to; and tremble at myself. There lurketh a wild beast beneath this black gown of mine."

"Alas, father," said Mary, "were you other than you are, I had been lost. To take me from that place needed a man wary as a fox; yet bold as a lion."

Clement reflected. "Thus much is certain: God chooseth well his fleshly instruments: and with imperfect hearts doeth His perfect work. Glory be to God!"

When they were near the convent Mary suddenly stopped, and seized the friar's arm, and began to cry. He looked at her kindly, and told her she had nothing to fear. It would be the happiest day she had ever spent. He then made her sit down and compose herself till he should return. He entered the convent and desired to see the abbess.

"My sister, give the glory to God. Mary is at the gate."

The astonishment and delight of the abbess were unbounded. She yielded at once to Clement's earnest request that the road of penitence might be smoothed at first to this unstable wanderer, and, after some opposition, she entered heartily into his views as to her actual reception. To give time for their little preparations Clement went slowly back, and seating himself by Mary soothed her: and heard her confession.

"The abbess has granted me that you shall propose your own penance."

"It shall be none the lighter," said she.

"I trow not," said he: "but that is future: to-day is given to joy alone."

He then led her round the building to the abbess's postern. As they went they heard musical instruments and singing.

"'Tis a feast-day," said Mary: "and I come to mar it."

"Hardly," said Clement smiling; "seeing that you are the queen of the fête."

"I, father? what mean you?"

"What, Mary, have you never heard that there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety-nine just persons which need no repentance? Now this convent is not heaven; nor the nuns angels; yet are there among them some angelic spirits; and

these sing and exult at thy return. And here methinks comes one of them; for I see her hand trembles at the keyhole."

The postern was flung open, and in a moment Sister Ursula clung sobbing and kissing round her friend's neck. The abbess followed more sedately, but little less moved.

Clement bade them farewell. They entreated him to stay: but he told them with much regret he could not. He had already tried his good brother Jerome's patience, and must hasten to the river: and perhaps sail for England to-morrow.

So Mary returned to the fold, and Clement strode briskly on towards the Rhine and England.

This was the man for whom Margaret's boy lay in wait with her letter.

THE HEARTH.

And that letter was one of those simple, touching appeals only her sex can write to those who have used them cruelly, and they love them. She began by telling him of the birth of the little boy, and the comfort he had been to her in all the distress of mind his long and strange silence had caused her. She described the little Gerard minutely, not forgetting the mole on his little finger. "Know you any one that hath the like on his? If you only saw him you could not choose but be proud of him; all the mothers in the street do envy me; but I the wives; for thou comest not to us. My own Gerard, some say thou art dead. But if thou wert dead how could I be alive? Others say that thou, whom I love so truly, art false. But this will I believe from no lips but thine. My father loved thee well; and as he lay a-dying he thought he saw thee on a great river, with thy face turned towards thy Margaret, but sore disfigured. Is't so, perchance? Have cruel men scarred thy

sweet face? or hast thou lost one of thy precious limbs? Why, then thou hast the more need of me, and I shall love thee not worse, alas! thinkest thou a woman's love is light as a man's? but better, than I did when I shed those few drops from my arm, not worth the tears thou didst shed for them; mindest thou? 'tis not so very long agone, dear Gerard."

The letter continued in this strain, and concluded without a word of reproach or doubt as to his faith and affection. Not that she was free from most distressing doubts: but they were not certainties; and to show them might turn the scale, and frighten him away from her with fear of being scolded. And of this letter she made soft Luke the bearer.

So she was not an angel after all.

Luke mingled with the passengers of two boats, and could hear nothing of Gerard Eliassoen. Nor did this surprise him. He was more surprised when, at the third attempt, a black friar said to him, somewhat severely, "And what would you with him you call Gerard Eliassoen?"

"Why, father, if he is alive, I have got a letter for him."

"Humph!" said Jerome. "I am sorry for it. However, the flesh is weak. Well, my son, he you seek will be here by the next boat, or the next boat after. And if he chooses to answer to that name — After all, I am not the keeper of his conscience."

"Good father, one plain word, for heaven's sake. This Gerard Eliassoen of Tergou — is he alive?"

"Humph! Why, certes, he that went by that name is alive."

"Well, then, that is settled," said Luke, dryly. But the next moment he found it necessary to run out of sight and blubber.

"Oh, why did the Lord make any women?" said he to himself. "I was content with the world till I fell in love. Here his little finger is more to her than my whole body, and he is not dead. And here I have got to give him this." He looked at the letter and dashed it on the ground. But he picked it up again with a spiteful snatch, and went to the landlord, with tears in his eyes, and begged for work. The landlord declined, said he had his own people.

"Oh, I seek not your money," said Luke. "I only want some work to keep me from breaking my heart about another man's lass."

"Good lad! good lad!" exploded the landlord; and found him lots of barrels to mend — on these terms. And he coopered with fury in the interval of the boats coming down the Rhine.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE HEARTH.

Writing an earnest letter seldom leaves the mind *in statu quo.* Margaret, in hers, vented her energy and her faith in her dying father's vision, or illusion; and, when this was done, and Luke gone, she wondered at her credulity, and her conscience pricked her about Luke; and Catherine came and scolded her, and she paid the price of false hopes, and elevation of spirits, by falling into deeper despondency. She was found in this state by a stanch friend she had lately made; Joan Ketel. This good woman came in radiant with an idea.

"Margaret, I know the cure for thine ill: the hermit of Gouda, a wondrous holy man. Why, he can tell what is coming, when he is in the mood."

"Ay, I have heard of him," said Margaret, hopelessly. Joan with some difficulty persuaded her to walk out as far as Gouda, and consult the hermit. They took some butter and eggs in a basket, and went to his cave.

What had made the pair such fast friends? Jorian some six weeks ago fell ill of a bowel disease; it began with raging pain; and when this went off, leaving him weak, an awkward symptom succeeded; nothing, either liquid or solid, would stay in his stomach a minute. The doctor said, "He must die if this goes on many hours; therefore, boil thou now a chicken with a golden angel in the water, and let him sup that." Alas! Gilt chicken broth shared the fate of the humbler viands, its predecessors. Then the curé steeped the thumb of St. Sergius

in beef broth. Same result. Then Joan ran weeping to Margaret to borrow some linen to make his shroud. "Let me see him," said Margaret. She came in and felt his pulse. "Ah!" said she, "I doubt they have not gone to the root. Open the window! Art stifling him; now change all his linen."

"Alack, woman, what for? Why foul more linen for a dying man?" objected the mediæval wife.

"Do as thou art bid," said Margaret, dully, and left the room.

Joan somehow found herself doing as she was bid. Margaret returned with her apron full of a flowering herb. She made a decoction, and took it to the bedside; and before giving it to the patient, took a spoonful herself, and smacked her lips hypocritically. "That is fair," said he with a feeble attempt at humor. "Why, 'tis sweet, and now 'tis bitter." She engaged him in conversation as soon as he had taken it. This bitter-sweet stayed by him. Seeing which she built on it as cards are built: mixed a very little schiedam in the third spoonful, and a little beaten yolk of egg in the seventh. And so with the patience of her sex she coaxed his body out of Death's grasp; and finally, Nature, being patted on the back, instead of kicked under the bed, set Jorian Ketel on his legs again. But the doctress made them both swear never to tell a soul her guilty deed. "They would put me in prison, away from my child."

The simple that saved Jorian was called sweet feverfew. She gathered it in his own garden. Her eagle eye had seen it growing out of the window.

Margaret and Joan, then, reached the hermit's cave, and placed their present on the little platform. Margaret then applied her mouth to the aperture, made for that purpose, and said, "Holy hermit, we bring thee butter and eggs of the best: and I, a poor deserted girl,

wife, yet no wife, and mother of the sweetest babe, come to pray thee tell me whether he is quick or dead, true to his vows or false."

A faint voice issued from the cave: "Trouble me not with the things of earth, but send me a holy friar. I am dying."

"Alas!" cried Margaret. "Is it e'en so, poor soul? Then let us in to help thee."

"Saints forbid! Thine is a woman's voice. Send me a holy friar!"

They went back as they came. Joan could not help saying, "Are women imps o' darkness, then, that they must not come anigh a dying bed?"

But Margaret was too deeply dejected to say anything. Joan applied rough consolation. But she was not listened to till she said, "And Jorian will speak out ere long; he is just on the boil. He is very grateful to thee, believe it."

"Seeing is believing," replied Margaret with quiet bitterness.

"Not but what he thinks you might have saved him with something more out o' the common than yon. 'A man of my inches to be cured wi' feverfew,' says he. 'Why, if there is a sorry herb,' says he. 'Why, I was thinking o' pulling all mine up,' says he. I up and told him remedies were none the better for being far-fetched; you and feverfew cured him, when the grand medicines came up faster than they went down. So says I, 'You may go down on your four bones to feverfew.' But, indeed, he is grateful at bottom; you are all his thought and all his chat. But he sees Gerard's folk coming around ye, and good friends, and he said only last night" —

"Well?"

"He made me vow not to tell ye."

"Prithee, tell me."

"Well, he said, 'An' if I tell what little I know, it won't bring him back, and it will set them all by the ears. I wish I had more headpiece,' said he, 'I am sore perplexed. But least said is soonest mended.' Yon is his favorite word; he comes back to't from a mile off."

Margaret shook her head. "Ay, we are wading in deep waters, my poor babe and me."

It was Saturday night: and no Luke.

"Poor Luke!" said Margaret. "It was very good of him to go on such an errand."

"He is one out of a hundred," replied Catherine warmly.

"Mother, do you think he would be kind to little Gerard?"

"I am sure he would. So do you be kinder to *him* when he comes back! Will ye now?"

"Ay."

THE CLOISTER.

Brother Clement, directed by the nuns, avoided a bend in the river, and, striding lustily forward, reached a station some miles nearer the coast than that where Luke lay in wait for Gerard Eliassoen. And the next morning he started early, and was in Rotterdam at noon. He made at once for the port, not to keep Jerome waiting.

He observed several monks of his order on the quay; he went to them; but Jerome was not amongst them. He asked one of them whether Jerome had arrived? "Surely, brother," was the reply.

"Prithee, where is he?"

"Where? Why, there!" said the monk, pointing to a ship in full sail. And Clement now noticed that all the monks were looking seaward.

"What, gone without me! Oh, Jerome! Jerome!"

cried he in a voice of anguish. Several of the friars turned round and stared.

"You must be brother Clement," said one of them at length; and on this they kissed him and greeted him with brotherly warmth, and gave him a letter Jerome had charged them with for him. It was a hasty scrawl. The writer told him coldly a ship was about to sail for England, and he was loath to lose time. He (Clement) might follow if he pleased, but he would do much better to stay behind, and preach to his own country folk. "Give the glory to God, brother; you have a wonderful power over Dutch hearts: but you are no match for those haughty islanders: you are too tender.

"Know thou that on the way I met one who asked me for thee under the name thou didst bear in the world. Be on thy guard! Let not the world catch thee again by any silken net. And remember, solitude, fasting, and prayer are the sword, spear, and shield of the soul. Farewell."

Clement was deeply shocked and mortified at this contemptuous desertion, and this cold-blooded missive.

He promised the good monks to sleep at the convent, and to preach wherever the prior should appoint (for Jerome had raised him to the skies as a preacher), and then withdrew abruptly, for he was cut to the quick, and wanted to be alone. He asked himself, was there some incurable fault in him, repulsive to so true a son of Dominic? Or was Jerome himself devoid of that Christian love which St. Paul had placed above faith itself? Shipwrecked with him, and saved on the same fragment of the wreck; his pupil, his penitent, his son in the Church, and now for four hundred miles his fellow-traveller in Christ; and to be shaken off like dirt, the first opportunity, with harsh and cold disdain. "Why, worldly hearts are no colder nor less trusty than this," said he.

"The only one that ever really loved me lies in a grave hard by. Fly me, fly to England, man born without a heart; I will go and pray over a grave at Sevenbergen."

Three hours later he passed Peter's cottage. A troop of noisy children were playing about the door, and the house had been repaired, and a new outhouse added. He turned his head hastily away, not to disturb a picture his memory treasured, and went to the churchyard.

He sought among the tombstones for Margaret's. He could not find it. He could not believe they had grudged her a tombstone, so searched the churchyard all over again.

"Oh, poverty! stern poverty! Poor soul, thou wert like me; no one was left that loved thee, when Gerard was gone."

He went into the church, and, after kissing the steps, prayed long and earnestly for the soul of her whose resting-place he could not find.

Coming out of the church he saw a very old man looking over the little churchyard gate. He went towards him, and asked him did he live in the place.

"Fourscore and twelve years, man and boy. And I come here every day of late, holy father, to take a peep. This is where I look to bide ere long."

"My son, can you tell me where Margaret lies?"

"Margaret? There's a many Margarets here."

"Margaret Brandt. She was daughter to a learned physician."

"As if I didn't know that," said the old man, pettishly. "But she doesn't lie here. Bless you, they left this a longful while ago. Gone in a moment, and the house empty. What, is she dead? Margaret a Peter dead? Now only think on't. Like enow; like enow. They great towns do terribly disagree wi' country folk."

"What great towns, my son?"

"Well, 'twas Rotterdam they went to from here, so I heard tell; or was it Amsterdam? Nay, I trow 'twas Rotterdam. And gone there to die!"

Clement sighed.

"'Twas not in her face now, that I saw. And I can mostly tell. Alack, there was a blooming young flower to be cut off so soon, and an old weed like me left standing still. Well, well, she was a May rose, yon; dear heart, what a winsome smile she had, and"—

"God bless thee, my son," said Clement; "farewell!" and he hurried away.

He reached the convent at sunset, and watched and prayed in the chapel for Jerome and Margaret, till it was long past midnight, and his soul had recovered its cold calm.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE HEARTH.

The next day, Sunday, after mass, was a bustling day at Catherine's house in the Hoog Straet. The shop was now quite ready, and Cornelis and Sybrandt were to open it next day; their names were above the door; also their sign, a white lamb sucking a gilt sheep. Eli had come, and brought them some more goods from his store to give them a good start. The hearts of the parents glowed at what they were doing, and the pair themselves walked in the garden together, and agreed they were sick of their old life, and it was more pleasant to make money than waste it: they vowed to stick to business like wax. Their mother's quick and ever watchful ear overheard this resolution through an open window, and she told Eli. The family supper was to include Margaret and her boy, and be a kind of inaugural feast, at which good trade advice was to flow from the elders, and good wine to be drunk to the success of the converts to commerce from agriculture in its unremunerative form, — wild oats. So Margaret had come over to help her mother-in-law, and also to shake off her own deep languor; and both their faces were as red as the fire. Presently in came Joan with a salad from Jorian's garden.

"He cut it for you, Margaret; you are all his chat; I shall be jealous. I told him you were to feast to-day. But oh, lass, what a sermon in the new kerk! Preaching? I never heard it till this day."

"Would I had been there then," said Margaret; "for I am dried up for want of dew from heaven."

"Why, he preacheth again this afternoon. But mayhap you are wanted here."

"Not she," said Catherine. "Come, away ye go, if y'are minded."

"Indeed," said Margaret, "methinks I should not be such a damper at table if I could come to 't warm from a good sermon."

"Then you must be brisk," observed Joan. "See, the folk are wending that way, and as I live, there goes the holy friar. Oh, bless us and save us, Margaret: the hermit! We forgot." And this active woman bounded out of the house, and ran across the road, and stopped the friar. She returned as quickly. "There, I was bent on seeing him nigh hand."

"What said he to thee?"

"Says he, 'My daughter, I will go to him ere sunset, God willing.' The sweetest voice. But, oh, my mistresses, what thin cheeks for a young man, and great eyes, not far from your color, Margaret."

"I have a great mind to go hear him," said Margaret. "But my cap is not very clean, and they will all be there in their snow-white mutches."

"There, take my handkerchief out of the basket," said Catherine; "you cannot have the child, I want him for my poor Kate. It is one of her ill days."

Margaret replied by taking the boy up-stairs. She found Kate in bed.

"How art thou, sweetheart? Nay, I need not ask. Thou art in sore pain; thou smilest so. See, I have brought thee one thou lovest."

"Two, by my way of counting," said Kate, with an angelic smile. She had a spasm at that moment would have made some of us roar like bulls.

"What, in your lap?" said Margaret, answering a gesture of the suffering girl. "Nay, he is too heavy, and thou in such pain."

"I love him too dear to feel his weight," was the reply.

Margaret took this opportunity, and made her toilet. "I am for the kerk," said she, "to hear a beautiful preacher." Kate sighed. "And a minute ago, Kate, I was all agog to go: that is the way with me this month past; up and down, up and down, like the waves of the Zuyder Zee. I'd as lieve stay aside thee; say the word!"

"Nay," said Kate, "prithee go; and bring me back every word. Well-a-day that I cannot go myself." And the tears stood in the patient's eyes. This decided Margaret, and she kissed Kate, looked under her lashes at the boy, and heaved a little sigh.

"I trow I must not," said she. "I never could kiss him a little; and my father was dead against waking a child by day or night. When 'tis thy pleasure to wake, speak thy aunt Kate the two new words thou hast gotten." And she went out, looking lovingly over her shoulder, and shut the door inaudibly.

"Joan, you will lend me a hand, and peel these?" said Catherine.

"That I will, dame." And the cooking proceeded with silent vigor.

"Now, Joan, them which help me cook and serve the meat, they help me eat it; that's a rule."

"There's worse laws in Holland than that. Your will is my pleasure, mistress; for my Luke hath got his supper i' the air. He is digging to-day, by good luck." (Margaret came down.)

"Eh, woman, yon is an ugly trade. There, she has just washed her face and gi'en her hair a turn, and now

who is like her? Rotterdam, that for you!" and Catherine snapped her fingers at the capital. "Give us a buss, hussy! Now mind, Eli won't wait supper for the duke. Wherefore, loiter not after your kerk is over."

Joan and she both followed her to the door, and stood at it watching her a good way down the street. For among homely housewives going out o' doors is half an incident. Catherine commented on the launch: "There, Joan, it is almost to me as if I had just started my own daughter for kerk, and stood a-looking after; the which I've done it manys and manys the times. Joan, lass, she won't hear a word against our Gerard; and, be he alive, he has used her cruel; that is why my bowels yearn for the poor wench. I'm older and wiser than she, and so I'll wed her to yon simple Luke, and there an end. What's one grandchild?"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH.

The sermon had begun when Margaret entered the great church of St. Laurens. It was a huge edifice, far from completed. Churches were not built in a year. The side aisles were roofed, but not the mid aisle nor the chancel; the pillars and arches were pretty perfect, and some of them whitewashed. But only one window in the whole church was glazed; the rest were at present great jagged openings in the outer walls.

But to-day all these uncouth imperfections made the church beautiful. It was a glorious summer afternoon, and the sunshine came broken into marvellous forms through those irregular openings, and played bewitching pranks upon so many broken surfaces.

It streamed through the gaping walls, and clove the dark, cool, side aisles with rivers of glory, and dazzled and glowed on the white pillars beyond.

And nearly the whole central aisle was checkered with light and shade in broken outlines; the shades seeming cooler and more soothing than ever shade was, and the lights like patches of amber diamond, animated with heavenly fire. And above, from west to east the blue sky vaulted the lofty aisle, and seemed quite close.

The sunny caps of the women made a sea of white, contrasting exquisitely with that vivid vault of blue.

For the mid aisle, huge as it was, was crammed, yet quite still. The words and the mellow, gentle, earnest voice of the preacher held them mute.

Margaret stood spellbound at the beauty, the devotion, "the great calm." She got behind a pillar in the north aisle; and there, though she could hardly catch a word, a sweet devotional languor crept over her at the loveliness of the place and the preacher's musical voice; and balmy oil seemed to trickle over the waves in her heart and smooth them. So she leaned against the pillar with eyes half closed, and all seemed soft and dreamy. She felt it good to be there.

Presently she saw a lady leave an excellent place opposite, to get out of the sun, which was indeed pouring on her head from the window. Margaret went round softly but swiftly, and was fortunate enough to get the place. She was now beside a pillar of the south aisle, and not above fifty feet from the preacher. She was at his side, a little behind him, but could hear every word.

Her attention, however, was soon distracted by the shadow of a man's head and shoulders bobbing up and down so drolly she had some ado to keep from smiling.

Yet it was nothing essentially droll.

It was the sexton digging.

She found that out in a moment by looking behind her, through the window, to whence the shadow came.

Now as she was looking at Jorian Ketel digging, suddenly a tone of the preacher's voice fell upon her ear and her mind so distinctly, it seemed literally to strike her, and make her vibrate inside and out.

Her hand went to her bosom, so strange and sudden was the thrill. Then she turned round, and looked at the preacher. His back was turned and nothing visible but his tonsure. She sighed. That tonsure, being all she saw, contradicted the tone effectually.

Yet she now leaned a little forward with downcast eyes, hoping for that accent again. It did not come. But the whole voice grew strangely upon her. It rose

and fell as the preacher warmed; and it seemed to waken faint echoes of a thousand happy memories. She would not look to dispel the melancholy pleasure this voice gave her.

Presently, in the middle of an eloquent period, the preacher stopped.

She almost sighed: a soothing music had ended. Could the sermon be ended already? No: she looked round; the people did not move.

A good many faces seemed now to turn her way. She looked behind her sharply. There was nothing there.

Startled countenances near her now eyed the preacher. She followed their looks; and there, in the pulpit, was a face as of a staring corpse. The friar's eyes, naturally large, and made larger by the thinness of his cheeks, were dilated to supernatural size, and glaring, her way, out of a bloodless face.

She cringed and turned fearfully round, for she thought there *must* be some terrible thing near her. No: there was nothing: she was the outside figure of the listening crowd.

At this moment the church fell into commotion. Figures got up all over the building, and craned forward; agitated faces by hundreds gazed from the friar to Margaret, and from Margaret to the friar. The turning to and fro of so many caps made a loud rustle. Then came shrieks of nervous women, and buzzing of men; and Margaret, seeing so many eyes levelled at her, shrank terrified behind the pillar, with one scared, hurried glance at the preacher.

Momentary as that glance was, it caught in that stricken face an expression that made her shiver.

She turned faint, and sat down on a heap of chips the workmen had left, and buried her face in her hands. The sermon went on again. She heard the sound of it,

but not the sense. She tried to think, but her mind was in a whirl. Thought would fix itself in no shape but this: that on that prodigy-stricken face she had seen a look stamped. And the recollection of that look now made her quiver from head to foot.

For that look was "Recognition."

The sermon, after wavering some time, ended in a strain of exalted, nay, feverish, eloquence, that went far to make the crowd forget the preacher's strange pause and ghastly glare.

Margaret mingled hastily with the crowd, and went out of the church with them.

They went their ways home. But she turned at the door, and went into the churchyard to Peter's grave. Poor as she was, she had given him a slab and a head-stone. She sat down on the slab, and kissed it: then threw her apron over her head that no one might distinguish her by her hair.

"Father," she said, "thou hast often heard me say I am wading in deep waters; but now I begin to think God only knows the bottom of them. I'll follow that friar round the world, but I'll see him at arm's length. And he shall tell me why he looked towards me like a dead man wakened, and not a soul behind me. O father! you often praised me here: speak a word for me *there*: for I am wading in deep waters."

Her father's tomb commanded a side view of the church door.

And on that tomb she sat with her face covered, waylaying the holy preacher.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE CLOISTER AND THE HEARTH.

The cool church, checkered with sunbeams and crowned with heavenly purple, soothed and charmed Father Clement, as it did Margaret; and more, it carried his mind direct to the Creator of all good and pure delights. Then his eye fell on the great aisle crammed with his country folk: a thousand snowy caps filigreed with gold. Many a hundred leagues he had travelled, but seen nothing like them, except snow. In the morning he had thundered, but this sweet afternoon seemed out of tune with threats. His bowels yearned over that multitude, and he must tell them of God's love. Poor souls, they heard almost as little of it from the pulpit then-a-days as the heathen used! He told them the glad tidings of salvation. The people hung upon his gentle, earnest tongue.

He was not one of those preachers who keep gyrating in the pulpit like the weathercock on the steeple. He moved the hearts of others more than his own body. But, on the other hand, he did not entirely neglect those who were in bad places. And presently, warm with this theme, that none of all that multitude might miss the joyful tidings of Christ's love, he turned him towards the south aisle.

And there, in a stream of sunshine from the window, was the radiant face of Margaret Brandt. He gazed at it without emotion. It just benumbed him soul and body.

But soon the words died in his throat, and he trembled as he glared at it.

There, with her auburn hair bathed in sunbeams, and glittering like the gloriola of a saint, and her face glowing doubly with its own beauty, and the sunshine it was set in — stood his dead love.

She was leaning very lightly against a white column. She was listening with tender, downcast lashes.

He had seen her listen so to him a hundred times.

There was no change in *her*. This was the blooming Margaret he had left, only a shade riper and more lovely.

He stared at her with monstrous eyes and bloodless cheeks.

The people died out of his sight. He heard, as in a dream, a rustling and rising all over the church, but could not take his prodigy-stricken eyes off that face, all life, and bloom, and beauty, and that wondrous auburn hair glistening gloriously in the sun.

He gazed, thinking she must vanish.

She remained.

All in a moment she was looking at him, full.

Her own violet eyes!

At this he was beside himself, and his lips parted to shriek out her name, when she turned her head swiftly, and soon after vanished, but not without one more glance, which, though rapid as lightning, encountered his, and left her couching and quivering with her mind in a whirl, and him panting and griping the pulpit convulsively; for this glance of hers, though not recognition, was the startled inquiring, nameless, indescribable look that precedes recognition. He made a mighty effort, and muttered something nobody could understand, then feebly resumed his discourse, and stammered and babbled on a while, till by degrees forcing himself, now she was out of sight, to look on it as a vision from the

other world, he rose into a state of unnatural excitement, and concluded in a style of eloquence that electrified the simple, for it bordered on rhapsody.

The sermon ended, he sat down on the pulpit-stool terribly shaken. But presently an idea very characteristic of the time took possession of him. He had sought her grave at Sevenbergen in vain. She had now been permitted to appear to him, and show him that she was buried *here;* probably hard by that very pillar, where her spirit had showed itself to him.

This idea once adopted soon settled on his mind with all the certainty of a fact; and he felt he had only to speak to the sexton (whom to his great disgust he had seen working during the sermon), to learn the spot where she was laid.

The church was now quite empty. He came down from the pulpit and stepped through an aperture in the south wall on to the grass, and went up to the sexton. He knew him in a moment. But Jorian never suspected the poor lad, whose life he had saved, in this holy friar. The loss of his shapely beard had wonderfully altered the outline of his face.[1] This had changed him even more than his tonsure, his short hair sprinkled with premature gray, and his cheeks thinned and paled by fasts and vigils.

"My son," said Friar Clement softly, "if you keep any memory of those whom you lay in the earth, prithee tell me is any Christian buried inside the church, near one of the pillars?"

"Nay, father," said Jorian, "here in the churchyard lie buried all that buried be. Why?"

[1] Pietro Vanucci and Andrea did not recognize him without his beard. The fact is, that the beard which has never known a razor grows in a very picturesque and characteristic form, and becomes a feature in the face, so that its removal may in some cases be an effectual disguise.

"No matter. Prithee tell me then where lieth Margaret Brandt."

"Margaret Brandt?" And Jorian stared stupidly at the speaker.

"She died about three years ago, and was buried here."

"Oh, that is another matter," said Jorian; "that was before my time. The vicar could tell you, likely, if so be she was a gentlewoman, or at the least rich enough to pay him his fee."

"Alas, my son! she was poor (and paid a heavy penalty for it), but born of decent folk. Her father, Peter, was a learned physician; she came hither from Sevenbergen — to die."

When Clement had uttered these words his head sunk upon his breast, and he seemed to have no power nor wish to question Jorian more. I doubt even if he knew where he was. He was lost in the past.

Jorian put down his spade, and, standing upright in the grave, set his arms akimbo, and said sulkily, "Are you making a fool of me, holy sir, or has some wag been making a fool of you?"

And having relieved his mind thus, he proceeded to dig again with a certain vigor that showed his somewhat irritable temper was ruffled.

Clement gazed at him with a puzzled but gently reproachful eye, for the tone was rude, and the words unintelligible.

Good-natured, though crusty, Jorian had not thrown up three spadefuls ere he became ashamed of it himself. "Why, what a base churl am I to speak thus to thee, holy father; and thou a-standing there looking at me like a lamb. Aha! I have it; 'tis Peter Brandt's grave you would fain see, not Margaret's. He does lie here, hard by the west door. There; I'll show you." And he

laid down his spade, and put on his doublet and jerkin to go with the friar.

He did not know there was anybody sitting on Peter's tomb; still less that she was watching for this holy friar.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

While Jorian was putting on his doublet and jerkin to go to Peter's tomb, his tongue was not idle. "They used to call him a magician out Sevenbergen way. And they do say he gave 'em a touch of his trade at parting: told 'em he saw Margaret's lad a-coming down Rhine in brave clothes and store o' money, but his face scarred by foreign glaive, and not altogether so many arms and legs as a went away wi'. But, dear heart, nought came on't. Margaret is still wearying for her lad; and Peter, he lies as quiet as his neighbors; not but what she hath put a stone slab over him, to keep him where he is, as you shall see."

He put both hands on the edge of the grave, and was about to raise himself out of it, but the friar laid a trembling hand on his shoulder, and said in a strange whisper, —

"How long since died Peter Brandt?"

"About two months. Why?"

"And his daughter buried him, say you?"

"Nay, I buried him, but she paid the fee and reared the stone. Why?"

"Then — but he had but one daughter: Margaret?"

"No more: leastways, that he owned to."

"Then you think Margaret is — is alive?"

"Think? Why, I should be dead else. Riddle me that."

"Alas, how can I? You love her!"

"No more than reason, being a married man, and father of four more sturdy knaves like myself. Nay,

the answer is, she saved my life scarce six weeks agone. Now had she been dead, she couldn't ha' kept me alive. Bless your heart! I couldn't keep a thing on my stomach, nor doctors couldn't make me. My Joan says, 'Tis time to buy thee a shroud.' — 'I dare say, so 'tis,' says I, 'but try and borrow one first.' In comes my lady, this Margaret, which she died three years ago, by your way on't, opens the windows, makes 'em shift me where I lay, and cures me in the twinkling of a bed-post; but wi' what? there pinches the shoe; with the scurviest herb, and out of my own garden, too; with sweet feverfew. A herb, quotha, 'tis a weed; leastways it was a weed till it cured me, but now whene'er I pass my bunch I doff bonnet, and, says I, 'My service t'ye.' Why, how now, father, you look wondrous pale, and now you are red, and now you are white? Why, what is the matter? What in Heaven's name is the matter?"

"The surprise — the joy — the wonder — the fear," gasped Clement.

"Why, what is it to thee? Art thou of kin to Margaret Brandt?"

"Nay; but I knew one that loved her well, so well her death nigh killed him, body and soul. And yet thou sayest she lives. And I believe thee."

Jorian stared, and after a considerable silence, said very gravely, "Father, you have asked me many questions, and I have answered them truly; now, for our Lady's sake, answer me but two. Did you in very sooth know one who loved this poor lass? Where?"

Clement was on the point of revealing himself, but he remembered Jerome's letter, and shrank from being called by the name he had borne in the world.

"I knew him in Italy," said he.

"If you knew him you can tell me his name," said Jorian, cautiously.

"His name was Gerard Eliassoen."

"Oh, but this is strange. Stay, what made thee say Margaret Brandt was dead?"

"I was with Gerard when a letter came from Margaret Van Eyck. The letter told him she he loved was dead and buried. Let me sit down, for my strength fails me. Foul play! foul play!"

"Father," said Jorian, "I thank Heaven for sending thee to me. Ay, sit ye down; ye do look like a ghost; ye fast overmuch to be strong. My mind misgives me; methinks I hold the clew to this riddle, and, if I do, there be two knaves in this town whose heads I would fain batter to pieces as I do this mould;" and he clenched his teeth and raised his long spade above his head, and brought it furiously down upon the heap several times. "Foul play? You never said a truer word i' your life; and, if you know where Gerard is now, lose no time, but show him the trap they have laid for him. Mine is but a dull head, but whiles the slow hound puzzles out the scent — go to. And I do think you and I ha' got hold of two ends o' one stick, and a main foul one."

Jorian then, after some of those useless preliminaries men of his class always deal in, came to the point of his story. He had been employed by the burgomaster of Tergou to repair the floor of an upper room in his house, and, when it was almost done, coming suddenly to fetch away his tools, curiosity had been excited by some loud words below, and he had lain down on his stomach, and heard the burgomaster talking about a letter, which Cornelis and Sybrandt were minded to convey into the place of one that a certain Hans Memling was taking to Gerard: "and it seems their will was good, but their stomach was small; so to give them courage the old man showed them a drawer full of silver, and if they did the trick they should each put a hand in, and have all the

silver they could hold in't. Well, father," continued Jorian, "I thought not much on't at the time, except for the bargain itself, *that* kept me awake mostly all night. Think on't! Next morning at peep of day who should I see but my masters Cornelis and Sybrandt come out of their house each with a black eye. 'Oho,' says I, 'what, yon Hans hath put his mark on ye; well now, I hope that is all ye have got for your pains.' Didn't they make for the burgomaster's house? I to my hiding-place."

At this part of Jorian's revelation the monk's nostril dilated, and his restless eye showed the suspense he was in.

"Well, father," continued Jorian, "the burgomaster brought them into that same room. He had a letter in his hand; but I am no scholar; however, I have got as many eyes in my head as the Pope hath, and I saw the drawer opened, and those two knaves put in each a hand and draw it out full. And, saints in glory, how they tried to hold more, and more, and more o' yon stuff! And Sybrandt, he had daubed his hand in something sticky, I think 'twas glue, and he made shift to carry one or two pieces away a-sticking to the back of his hand, he! he! he! 'Tis a sin to laugh. So you see luck was on the wrong side as usual; they had done the trick; but how they did it, that, methinks, will never be known till doomsday. Go to, they left their immortal jewels in yon drawer. Well, they got a handful of silver for them; the devil had the worst o' yon bargain. There, father, that is off my mind; often I longed to tell it some one, but I durst not to the women, or Margaret would not have had a friend left in the world; for those two black-hearted villains are the favorites. 'Tis always so. Have not the old folk just taken a brave new shop for them in this very town, in the Hoog Straet? There may you see their sign, a gilt sheep and a lambkin; a

brace of wolves sucking their dam would be nigher the mark. And there the whole family feast this day; oh, 'tis a fine world. What, not a word, holy father; you sit there like stone, and have not even a curse to bestow on them, the stony-hearted miscreants. What, was it not enough the poor lad was all alone in a strange land; must his own flesh and blood go and lie away the one blessing his enemies had left him? And then think of her pining and pining all these years, and sitting at the window looking adown the street for Gerard! and so constant, so tender, and true: my wife says she is sure no woman ever loved a man truer than she loves the lad those villains have parted from her: and the day never passes but she weeps salt tears for him. And, when I think that, but for those two greedy lying knaves, yon winsome lad, whose life I saved, might be by her side this day the happiest he in Holland; and the sweet lass that saved my life might be sitting with her cheek upon her sweetheart's shoulder, the happiest she in Holland in place of the saddest; oh, I thirst for their blood, the nasty, sneaking, lying, cogging, cowardly, heartless, bowelless — how now!"

The monk started wildly up, livid with fury and despair, and rushed headlong from the place with both hands clenched and raised on high. So terrible was this inarticulate burst of fury, that Jorian's puny ire died out at sight of it, and he stood looking dismayed after the human tempest he had launched.

While thus absorbed he felt his arm grasped by a small, tremulous hand.

It was Margaret Brandt.

He started: her coming there just then seemed so strange.

She had waited long on Peter's tombstone, but the friar did not come. So she went into the church to see if he was there still. She could not find him.

Presently, going up the south aisle, the gigantic shadow of a friar came rapidly along the floor and part of a pillar, and seemed to pass through her. She was near screaming: but in a moment remembered Jorian's shadow had come in so from the churchyard: and tried to clamber out the nearest way. She did so, but with some difficulty; and by that time Clement was just disappearing down the street: yet, so expressive at times is the body as well as the face, she could see he was greatly agitated. Jorian and she looked at one another, and at the wild figure of the distant friar.

"Well?" said she to Jorian, trembling.

"Well," said he, "you startled me. How come you here of all people?"

"Is this a time for idle chat? What said he to you? He has been speaking to you; deny it not."

"Girl, as I stand here, he asked me whereabout you were buried in this churchyard."

"Ah?"

"I told him, nowhere, thank Heaven: you were alive and saving other folk from the churchyard."

"Well?"

"Well, the long and the short is, he knew thy Gerard in Italy: and a letter came saying you were dead; and it broke thy poor lad's heart. Let me see; who was the letter written by? Oh, by the demoiselle Van Eyck. That was *his* way of it. But I up and told him nay; 'twas neither demoiselle nor dame that penned yon lie, but Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, and those foul knaves, Cornelis and Sybrandt; these changed the true letter for one of their own; I told him as how I saw the whole villany done, through a chink; and now, if I have not been and told you!"

"Oh, cruel! cruel! But he lives. The fear of fears is gone. Thank God!"

"Ay, lass; and as for thine enemies, I have given them a dig. For yon friar is friendly to Gerard, and he is gone to Eli's house, methinks. For I told him where to find Gerard's enemies and thine, and wow but he will give them their lesson. If ever a man was mad with rage, it's yon. He turned black and white, and parted like a stone from a sling. Girl, there was thunder in his eye and silence on his lips. Made me cold, a did."

"O Jorian! what have you done?" cried Margaret. "Quick! quick! help me thither, for the power is gone all out of my body. You know him not as I do. Oh, if you had seen the blow he gave Ghysbrecht; and heard the frightful crash! Come, save him from worse mischief. The water is deep enow; but not bloody yet; come!"

Her accents were so full of agony that Jorian sprang out of the grave and came with her, huddling on his jerkin as he went.

But, as they hurried along, he asked her what on earth she meant. "I talk of this friar, and you answer me of Gerard."

"Man, see you not, *this* is Gerard!"

"This Gerard! what mean ye?"

"I mean, yon friar is my boy's father. I have waited for him long, Jorian. Well, he is come to me at last. And thank God for it. Oh, my poor child! Quicker, Jorian, quicker!"

"Why, thou art mad as he. Stay! By St. Bavon, yon *was* Gerard's face; 'twas nought like it; yet somehow—'twas it. Come on! come on! let me see the end of this."

"The end? How many of us will live to see that?"

They hurried along in breathless silence, till they reached Hoog Straet.

Then Jorian tried to reassure her. "You are making

your own trouble," said he; "who says he has gone thither? more likely to the convent to weep and pray, poor soul. Oh, cursed, cursed villains!"

"Did not you tell him where those villains bide?"

"Ay, that I did."

"Then quicker, O Jorian, quicker! I see the house. Thank God and all the saints, I shall be in time to calm him. I know what I'll say to him; Heaven forgive me! Poor Catherine! 'tis of her I think: she has been a mother to me."

The shop was a corner house, with two doors: one in the main street for customers, and a house-door round the corner.

Margaret and Jorian were now within twenty yards of the shop, when they heard a roar inside, like as of some wild animal, and the friar burst out, white and raging, and went tearing down the street.

Margaret screamed, and sank fainting on Jorian's arm.

Jorian shouted after him, "Stay, madman, know thy friends."

But he was deaf, and went headlong, shaking his clenched fists high, high, in the air.

"Help me in, good Jorian," moaned Margaret, turning suddenly calm. "Let me know the worst, and die."

He supported her trembling limbs into the house.

It seemed unnaturally still; not a sound.

Jorian's own heart beat fast.

A door was before him, unlatched. He pushed it softly with his left hand, and Margaret and he stood on the threshold.

What they saw there you shall soon know.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

It was supper-time. Eli's family were collected round the board; Margaret only was missing. To Catherine's surprise, Eli said he would wait a bit for her.

"Why, I told her you would not wait for the duke."

"She is not the duke: she is a poor, good lass that hath waited not minutes, but years, for a graceless son of mine. You can put the meat on the board all the same; then we can fall to, without further loss o' time, when she does come."

The smoking dishes smelt so savory that Eli gave way. "She will come if we begin," said he; "they always do. Come, sit ye down, Mistress Joan; y'are not here for a slave, I trow, but a guest. There, I hear a quick step — off covers, and fall to."

The covers were withdrawn, and the knives brandished. Then burst into the room, not the expected Margaret, but a Dominican friar, livid with rage.

He was at the table in a moment, in front of Cornelis and Sybrandt, threw his tall body over the narrow table, and, with two hands hovering above their shrinking heads, like eagles over a quarry, he cursed them by name, soul and body, in this world and the next. It was an age eloquent in curses: and this curse was so full, so minute, so blighting, blasting, withering, and tremendous, that I am afraid to put all the words on paper. "Cursed be the lips," he shrieked, "which spoke the lie that Margaret was dead; may they rot before the grave, and kiss white-hot iron in hell thereafter; doubly cursed be the hands that changed those letters, and be

they struck off by the hangman's knife, and handle hell-fire forever; thrice accursed be the cruel hearts that did conceive that damned lie, to part true love forever; may they sicken and wither on earth joyless, loveless, hopeless; and wither to dust before their time; and burn in eternal fire." He cursed the meat at their mouths, and every atom of their bodies, from their hair to the soles of their feet. Then turning from the cowering, shuddering pair, who had almost hid themselves beneath the table, he tore a letter out of his bosom, and flung it down before his father.

"Read that, thou hard old man, that didst imprison thy son; read, and see what monsters thou hast brought into the world. The memory of my wrongs and hers, dwell with you all forever! I will meet you again at the judgment day; on earth ye will never see me more."

And in a moment, as he had come, so he was gone, leaving them stiff, and cold, and white as statues, round the smoking board.

And this was the sight that greeted Margaret's eyes and Jorian's — pale figures of men and women petrified around the untasted food, as Eastern poets feigned.

Margaret glanced her eye round, and gasped out, "Oh, joy! all here; no blood hath been shed. Oh, you cruel, cruel men! I thank God he hath not slain you."

At sight of her Catherine gave an eloquent scream; then turned her head away. But Eli, who had just cast his eye over the false letter, and begun to understand it all, seeing the other victim come in at that very moment with *her* wrongs reflected in her sweet, pale face, started to his feet in a transport of rage, and shouted, "Stand clear, and let me get at the traitors. I'll hang for them." And in a moment he whipped out his short sword, and fell upon them.

"Fly!" screamed Margaret. "Fly!"

They slipped howling under the table, and crawled out the other side.

But, ere they could get to the door, the furious old man ran round and intercepted them. Catherine only screamed and wrung her hands; your notables are generally useless at such a time; and blood would certainly have flowed, but Margaret and Jorian seized the fiery old man's arms, and held them with all their might, whilst the pair got clear of the house; then they let him go; and he went vainly raging after them out into the street.

They were a furlong off, running like hares.

He hacked down the board on which their names were written, and brought it in-doors, and flung it into the chimney-place.

Catherine was sitting rocking herself with her apron over her head. Joan had run to her husband. Margaret had her arms round Catherine's neck; and, pale and panting, was yet making efforts to comfort her.

But it was not to be done. "O my poor children!" she cried. "O miserable mother! 'Tis a mercy Kate was ill up-stairs. There, I have lived to thank God for that!" she cried, with a fresh burst of sobs. "It would have killed her. He had better have stayed in Italy, as come home to curse his own flesh and blood and set us all by the ears."

"Oh, hold your chat, woman," cried Eli, angrily; "you are still on the side of the ill-doer. You are cheap served; your weakness made the rogues what they are; I was for correcting them in their youth: for sore ills, sharp remedies; but you still sided with their faults, and undermined me, and baffled-wise severity. And you, Margaret, leave comforting her that ought rather to comfort you; for what is her hurt to yours? But she never

had a grain of justice under her skin; and never will. So come thou to me; that am thy father from this hour."

This was a command; so she kissed Catherine, and went tottering to him, and he put her on a chair beside him, and she laid her feeble head on his honest breast: but not a tear: it was too deep for that.

"Poor lamb," said he. After awhile — "Come, good folks," said true Eli, in a broken voice, to Jorian and Joan, "we are in a little trouble, as you see; but that is no reason you should starve. For our Lady's sake, fall to; and add not to my grief the reputation of a churl. What the dickens!" added he, with a sudden ghastly attempt at stout-heartedness, "the more knaves I have the luck to get shut of, the more my need of true men and women, to help me clear the dish, and cheer mine eye with honest faces about me where else were gaps. Fall to, I do entreat ye."

Catherine, sobbing, backed his request. Poor, simple, antique, hospitable souls! Jorian, whose appetite, especially since his illness, was very keen, was for acting on this hospitable invitation; but Joan whispered a word in his ear, and he instantly drew back. "Nay, I'll touch no meat that holy Church hath cursed."

"In sooth, I forgot," said Eli, apologetically. "My son, who was reared at my table, hath cursed my victuals. That seems strange. Well, what God wills, man must bow to."

The supper was flung out into the yard.

Jorian took his wife home, and heavy sadness reigned in Eli's house that night.

Meantime, where was Clement?

Lying at full length upon the floor of the convent church, with his lips upon the lowest step of the altar, in an indescribable state of terror, misery, penitence, and

self-abasement: through all which struggled gleams of joy that Margaret was alive.

Night fell and found him lying there weeping, and praying: and morning would have found him there too; but he suddenly remembered that, absorbed in his own wrongs and Margaret's, he had committed another sin besides intemperate rage. He had neglected a dying man.

He rose instantly, groaning at his accumulated wickedness, and set out to repair the omission. The weather had changed; it was raining hard, and, when he got clear of the town, he heard the wolves baying; they were on the foot. But Clement was himself again, or nearly; he thought little of danger or discomfort, having a shameful omission of religious duty to repair: he went stoutly forward through rain and darkness.

And, as he went, he often beat his breast, and cried, "*Mea culpa! Mea culpa!*"

CHAPTER XL.

What that sensitive mind, and tender conscience, and loving heart, and religious soul, went through even in a few hours, under a situation so sudden and tremendous, is perhaps beyond the power of words to paint.

Fancy yourself the man; and then put yourself in his place!

Were I to write a volume on it, we should have to come to that at last.

I shall relate his next two overt acts. They indicate his state of mind after the first fierce tempest of the soul had subsided.

After spending the night with the dying hermit in giving and receiving holy consolations, he set out not for Rotterdam, but for Tergou. He went there to confront his fatal enemy the burgomaster, and, by means of that parchment, whose history by-the-by was itself a romance, to make him disgorge; and give Margaret her own.

Heated and dusty, he stopped at the fountain, and there began to eat his black bread and drink of the water. But in the middle of his frugal meal a female servant came running, and begged him to come and shrive her dying master. He returned the bread to his wallet, and followed her without a word.

She took him — to the Stadthouse.

He drew back with a little shudder when he saw her go in.

But he almost instantly recovered himself, and followed her into the house, and up the stairs. And there in bed, propped up by pillows, lay his deadly enemy, looking already like a corpse.

Clement eyed him a moment from the door, and thought of all — the tower, the wood, the letter. Then he said in a low voice, "*Pax vobiscum!*" He trembled a little while he said it.

The sick man welcomed him as eagerly as his weak state permitted. "Thank Heaven, thou art come in time to absolve me from my sins, father, and pray for my soul, thou and thy brethren."

"My son," said Clement, "before absolution cometh confession. In which act there must be no reservation, as thou valuest thy soul's weal. Bethink thee, therefore, wherein thou hast most offended God and the Church, while I offer up a prayer for wisdom to direct thee."

Clement then kneeled and prayed; and, when he rose from his knees, he said to Ghysbrecht, with apparent calmness, "My son, confess thy sins."

"Ah, father," said the sick man, "they are many and great."

"Great then be thy penitence, my son; so shalt thou find God's mercy great."

Ghysbrecht put his hands together, and began to confess with every appearance of contrition.

He owned he had eaten meat in mid-Lent. He had often absented himself from mass on the Lord's Day, and saints' days: and had trifled with other religious observances, which he enumerated with scrupulous fidelity.

When he had done, the friar said quietly, "'Tis well, my son. These be faults. Now to thy crimes. Thou hadst done better to begin with them."

"Why, father, what crimes lie to my account if these be none?"

"Am I confessing to thee, or thou to me?" said Clement, somewhat severely.

"Forgive me, father! Why, surely, I to you. But I know not what you call crimes."

"The seven deadly sins, art thou clear of them?"

"Heaven forfend I should be guilty of them. I know them not by name."

"Many do them all, that cannot name them. Begin with that one which leads to lying, theft, and murder."

"I am quit of that one, any way. How call you it?"

"Avarice, my son."

"Avarice? Oh, as to that, I have been a saving man all my day; but I have kept a good table, and not altogether forgotten the poor. But, alas, I am a great sinner. Mayhap the next will catch me. What is the next?"

"We have not yet done with this one. Bethink thee, the Church is not to be trifled with."

"Alas! am I in a condition to trifle with her now? Avarice? Avarice?"

He looked puzzled and innocent.

"Hast thou ever robbed the fatherless?" inquired the friar.

"Me? robbed the fatherless?" gasped Ghysbrecht; "not that I mind."

"Once more, my son, I am forced to tell thee thou art trifling with the Church. Miserable man! another evasion, and I leave thee, and fiends will straightway gather round thy bed, and tear thee down to the bottomless pit."

"Oh, leave me not! leave me not!" shrieked the terrified old man. "The Church knows all. I *must* have robbed the fatherless. I will confess. Who shall I begin with? My memory for names is shaken."

The defence was skilful, but in this case failed.

"Hast thou forgotten Floris Brandt?" said Clement, stonily.

The sick man reared himself in bed in a pitiable state of terror.

"How knew you that?" said he.

"The Church knows many things," said Clement, coldly, "and by many ways that are dark to thee. Miserable impenitent, you called her to your side, hoping to deceive her. You said 'I will not confess to the curé, but to some friar who knows not my misdeeds. So will I cheat the Church on my death-bed, and die as I have lived.' But God, kinder to thee than thou art to thyself, sent to thee one whom thou couldst not deceive. He has tried thee; he was patient with thee, and warned thee not to trifle with holy Church; but all is in vain; thou canst not confess; for thou art impenitent as a stone. Die, then, as thou hast lived. Methinks I see the fiends crowding round the bed for their prey. They wait but for me to go. And I go."

He turned his back; but Ghysbrecht, in extremity of terror, caught him by the frock. "Oh, holy man, mercy! stay. I will confess all, all. I robbed my friend Floris. Alas, would it had ended there; for he lost little by me; but I kept the land from Peter his son, and from Margaret, Peter's daughter. Yet I was always going to give it back; but I couldn't, I couldn't."

"Avarice, my son, avarice. Happy for thee 'tis not too late."

"No. I will leave it her by will. She will not have long to wait for it now; not above a month or two at farthest."

"For which month's possession thou wouldst damn thy soul forever. Thou fool!"

The sick man groaned, and prayed the friar to be reasonable. The friar firmly, but gently and persuasively, persisted, and with infinite patience detached the dying man's grip from another's property. There were times when his patience was tried, and he was on the point of thrusting his hand into his bosom and produc

ing the deed, which he had brought for that purpose; but after yesterday's outbreak he was on his guard against choler; and, to conclude, he conquered his impatience; he conquered a personal repugnance to the man, so strong as to make his own flesh creep all the time he was struggling with this miser for his soul; and at last, without a word about the deed, he won upon him to make full and prompt restitution.

How the restitution was made will be briefly related elsewhere: also certain curious effects produced upon Ghysbrecht by it; and when and on what terms Ghysbrecht and Clement parted.

I promised to relate two acts of the latter, indicative of his mind.

This is one. The other is told in two words.

As soon as he was quite sure Margaret had her own, and was a rich woman, —

He disappeared.

CHAPTER XLI.

It was the day after that terrible scene; the little house in the Hoog Straet was like a grave, and none more listless and dejected than Catherine, so busy and sprightly by nature. After dinner, her eyes red with weeping, she went to the convent to try and soften Gerard, and lay the first stone at least of a reconciliation. It was some time before she could make the porter understand whom she was seeking. Eventually she learned he had left late last night, and was not expected back. She went sighing with the news to Margaret. She found her sitting idle, like one with whom life had lost its savor; she had her boy clasped so tight in her arms, as if he was all she had left, and she feared some one would take him too. Catherine begged her to come to the Hoog Straet.

"What for?" sighed Margaret. "You cannot but say to yourselves, 'she is the cause of all.'"

"Nay, nay," said Catherine, "we are not so ill-hearted, and Eli is so fond on you; you will, maybe, soften him."

"Oh, if you think I can do any good, I'll come," said Margaret, with a weary sigh.

They found Eli and a carpenter putting up another name in place of Cornelis's and Sybrandt's; and what should that name be, but Margaret Brandt's.

With all her affection for Margaret, this went through poor Catherine like a knife. "The bane of one is another's meat," said she.

"Can he make me spend the money unjustly?" replied Margaret coldly.

"You are a good soul," said Catherine. "Ay, so best, sith he is the strongest."

The next day Giles dropped in, and Catherine told the story all in favor of the black sheep, and invited his pity for them, anathematized by their brother, and turned on the wide world by their father. But Giles's prejudices ran the other way; he heard her out, and told her bluntly the knaves had got off cheap; they deserved to be hanged at Margaret's door into the bargain, and, dismissing them with contempt, crowed with delight at the return of his favorite. "I'll show him," said he, "what 'tis to have a brother at court with a heart to serve a friend, and a head to point the way."

"Bless thee, Giles," murmured Margaret softly.

"Thou wast ever his stanch friend, dear Giles," said little Kate; "but alack, I know not what thou canst do for him now."

Giles had left them, and all was sad and silent again, when a well-dressed man opened the door softly, and asked was Margaret Brandt here.

"D'ye hear, lass? You are wanted," said Catherine briskly. In her the gossip was indestructible.

"Well, mother," said Margaret listlessly, "and here I am."

A shuffling of feet was heard at the door, and a colorless, feeble old man was assisted into the room. It was Ghysbrecht Van Swieten. At sight of him, Catherine shrieked, and threw her apron over her head, and Margaret shuddered violently, and turned her head swiftly away, not to see him.

A feeble voice issued from the strange visitor's lips: "Good people, a dying man hath come to ask your forgiveness."

"Come to look on your work, you mean," said Catherine, taking down her apron, and bursting out sob-

bing. "There, there, she is fainting; look to her, Eli, quick."

"Nay," said Margaret, in a feeble voice, "the sight of him gave me a turn, that is all. Prithee let him say his say, and go; for he is the murtherer of me and mine."

"Alas," said Ghysbrecht, "I am too feeble to say it standing, and no one biddeth me sit down."

Eli, who had followed him into the house, interfered here, and said, half sullenly, half apologetically, "Well, burgomaster, 'tis not our wont to leave a visitor standing whiles we sit. But, man, man, you have wrought us too much ill." And the honest fellow's voice began to shake with anger he fought hard to contain, because it was his own house.

Then Ghysbrecht found an advocate in one who seldom spoke in vain in that family.

It was little Kate. "Father, mother," said she, "my duty to you, but this is not well. Death squares all accounts. And see you not death in his face? I shall not live long, good friends; and his time is shorter than mine."

Eli made haste and set a chair for their dying enemy with his own hands. Ghysbrecht's attendants put him into it. "Go fetch the boxes," said he. They brought in two boxes, and then retired, leaving their master alone in the family he had so cruelly injured.

Every eye was now bent on him, except Margaret's. He undid the boxes, with unsteady fingers, and brought out one of the title-deeds of a property at Tergou. "This land and these houses belonged to Floris Brandt, and do belong to thee of right, his granddaughter. These I did usurp for a debt long since defrayed with interest. These I now restore their rightful owner with penitent tears. In this other box are three hundred and forty golden angels, being the rent and fines I have

received from that land more than Floris Brandt's debt to me. I have kept compt, still meaning to be just one day; but Avarice withheld me. Pray, good people, against temptation! I was not born dishonest; yet you see."

"Well, to be sure!" cried Catherine. "And you the burgomaster! Hast whipt good store of thieves in thy day. However," said she, on second thoughts, "'tis better late than never. What, Margaret, art deaf? The good man hath brought thee back thine own. Art a rich woman. Alack, what a mountain o' gold!"

"Bid him keep land and gold, and give me back my Gerard, that he stole from me with his treason," said Margaret, with her head still averted.

"Alas!" said Ghysbrecht, "would I could. What I can I have done. Is it nought? It cost me a sore struggle; and I rose from my last bed to do it myself, lest some mischance should come between her and her rights."

"Old man," said Margaret, "since thou, whose idol is pelf, hast done this, God and the saints will, as I hope, forgive thee. As for me, I am neither saint nor angel, but only a poor woman, whose heart thou hast broken. Speak to him, Kate; for I am like the dead."

Kate meditated a little while; and then her soft silvery voice fell like a soothing melody upon the air. "My poor sister hath a sorrow that riches cannot heal. Give her time, Ghysbrecht; 'tis not in nature she should forgive thee all. Her boy is fatherless; and she is neither maid, wife, nor widow; and the blow fell but two days syne, that laid her heart a-bleeding."

A single heavy sob from Margaret was the comment to these words.

"Therefore, give her time! And, ere thou diest, she will forgive thee all, ay, even to pleasure me, that haply

shall not be long behind thee, Ghysbrecht. Meantime, we, whose wounds be sore, but not so deep as hers, do pardon thee, a penitent and a dying man; and I, for one, will pray for thee from this hour; go in peace!"

Their little oracle had spoken; it was enough. Eli even invited him to break a manchet and drink a stoup of wine to give him heart for his journey.

But Ghysbrecht declined, and said what he had done was a cordial to him. "Man seeth but a little way before him, neighbor. This land I clung so to, it was a bed of nettles to me all the time. 'Tis gone: and I feel happier and livelier like for the loss on't."

He called his men and they lifted him into the litter.

When he was gone, Catherine gloated over the money. She had never seen so much together, and was almost angry with Margaret, for "sitting out there like an image." And she dilated on the advantages of money.

And she teased Margaret till at last she prevailed on her to come and look at it.

"Better let her be, mother," said Kate. "How can she relish gold, with a heart in her bosom liker lead?" But Catherine persisted.

The result was, Margaret looked down at all her wealth with wondering eyes. Then suddenly wrung her hands and cried with piercing anguish, "Too late! too late!" And shook off her leaden despondency, only to go into strong hysterics over the wealth that came too late to be shared with him she loved.

A little of this gold, a portion of this land, a year or two ago, when it was as much her own as now; and Gerard would have never left her side for Italy or any other place.

Too late! Too late!

CHAPTER XLII.

Not many days after this came the news that Margaret Van Eyck was dead and buried. By a will she had made a year before, she left all her property, after her funeral expenses and certain presents to Reicht Heynes, to her dear daughter Margaret Brandt, requesting her to keep Reicht as long as unmarried. By this will Margaret inherited a furnished house, and pictures and sketches that in the present day would be a fortune: among the pictures was one she valued more than a gallery of others. It represented "A Betrothal." The solemnity of the ceremony was marked in the grave face of the man, and the demure complacency of the woman. She was painted almost entirely by Margaret Van Eyck, but the rest of the picture by Jan. The accessories were exquisitely finished, and remain a marvel of skill to this day. Margaret Brandt sent word to Reicht to stay in the house till such time as she could find the heart to put foot in it, and miss the face and voice that used to meet her there: and to take special care of the picture "in the little cubboord;" meaning the diptych.

The next thing was, Luke Peterson came home, and heard that Gerard was a monk.

He was like to go mad with joy. He came to Margaret and said, —

"Never heed, mistress. If he cannot marry you, I can."

"You?" said Margaret. "Why, I have seen him."

"But he is a friar."

"He was my husband, and my boy's father long ere he was a friar. And I have seen him. I've *seen* him."

Luke was thoroughly puzzled. "I'll tell you what," said he; "I have got a cousin a lawyer. I'll go and ask him whether you are married or single."

"Nay, I shall ask my own heart, not a lawyer. So that is your regard for me; to go making me the town talk, oh, fie!"

"That is done already without a word from me."

"But not by such as seek my respect. And if you do it, never come nigh me again."

"Ay," said Luke, with a sigh, "you are like a dove to all the rest; but you are a hard-hearted tyrant to me."

"'Tis your own fault, dear Luke, for wooing me. That is what lets me from being as kind to you as I desire. Luke, my bonny lad, listen to me. I am rich now; I can make my friends happy, though not myself. Look round the street, look round the parish. There is many a quean in it, fairer than I twice told, and not spoiled with weeping. Look high: and take your choice. Speak you to the lass herself, and I'll speak to the mother; they shall not say thee nay; take my word for't."

"I see what ye mean," said Luke, turning very red. "But if I can't have your liking, I will none o' your money. I was your servant when you were poor as I; and poorer. No; if you would liever be a friar's leman than an honest man's wife, you are not the woman I took you for; so part we withouten malice; seek you your comfort on yon road, where never a she did find it yet, and, for me, I'll live and die a bachelor. Good even, mistress."

"Farewell, dear Luke; and God forgive you for saying *that* to me."

For some days Margaret dreaded, almost as much as

she desired, the coming interview with Gerard. She said to herself, "I wonder not he keeps away awhile; for so should I." However, he would hear he was a father; and the desire to see their boy would overcome everything; "and," said the poor girl to herself, "if so be that meeting does not kill me, I feel I shall be better after it than I am now."

But when day after day went by, and he was not heard of, a freezing suspicion began to crawl and creep towards her mind. What if his absence was intentional? What if he had gone to some cold-blooded monks his fellows, and they had told him never to see her more? The convent had ere this shown itself as merciless to true lovers as the grave itself.

At this thought the very life seemed to die out of her.

And now for the first time deep indignation mingled at times with her grief and apprehension. "Can he have ever loved me? To run from me and his boy without a word! Why this poor Luke thinks more of me than he does."

While her mind was in this state, Giles came roaring, "I've hit the clout; our Gerard is Vicar of Gouda."

A very brief sketch of the dwarf's court life will suffice to prepare the reader for his own account of this feat. Some months before he went to court his intelligence had budded. He himself dated the change from a certain 8th of June, when, swinging by one hand along with the week's washing on a tight rope in the drying ground, something went crack inside his head: and lo! intellectual powers unchained. At court his shrewdness and bluntness of speech, coupled with his gigantic voice and his small stature, made him a power; without the last item I fear they would have conducted him to that unpopular gymnasium, the gallows. The young Duchess of Burgundy, and Marie, the heiress apparent, both

petted him, as great ladies have petted dwarfs in all ages; and the court poet melted butter by the six-foot rule, and poured enough of it down his back to stew Goliah in. He even amplified, versified, and enfeebled, certain rough and ready sentences dictated by Giles.

The centipedal prolixity that resulted went to Eli by letter, thus entitled:

"The high and puissant Princess Marie
of Bourgogne her lytel jantilman hys
complaynt of ye Coort, and
praise of a rusticall lyfe, versificated, and empapyred
by me the lytel jantilman's right lovynge
and obsequious servitor, etc."

But the dwarf reached his climax by a happy mixture of mind and muscle; thus:

The day before a grand court joust he challenged the duke's giant to a trial of strength. This challenge made the gravest grin, and aroused expectation.

Giles had a lofty pole planted ready, and at the appointed hour went up it like a squirrel, and by strength of arm made a right angle with his body, and so remained; then slid down so quickly, that the high and puissant princess squeaked, and hid her face in her hands, not to see the demise of her pocket-Hercules.

The giant effected only about ten feet, then looked ruefully up and ruefully down, and descended, bathed in perspiration, to argue the matter.

"It was not the dwarf's greater strength, but his smaller body."

The spectators received this excuse with loud derision. There was the fact, the dwarf was great at mounting a pole; the giant only great at excuses. In short Giles had gauged their intellects, — with his own body, no doubt.

"Come," said he, "an ye go to that, I'll wrestle ye, my lad, if so be you will let me blindfold your eyne."

The giant smarting under defeat, and thinking he could surely recover it by this means, readily consented.

"Madam," said Giles, "see you yon blind Samson? At a signal from me he shall make me a low obeisance, and unbonnet to me."

"How may that be, being blinded?" inquired a maid of honor.

"That is my affair."

"I'll wager on Giles for one," said the princess.

When several wagers were laid pro and con, Giles hit the giant in the bread-basket. He went double (the obeisance), and his bonnet fell off.

The company yelled with delight at this delicate stroke of wit, and Giles took to his heels. The giant followed as soon as he could recover his breath and tear off his bandage. But it was too late; Giles had prepared a little door in the wall, through which he could pass, but not a giant, and had colored it so artfully it looked like wall; this door he tore open, and went headlong through, leaving no vestige but this posy, written very large upon the reverse of his trick door:

> Long limbs, big body, wanting wit,
> By wee and wise is bet and bit.

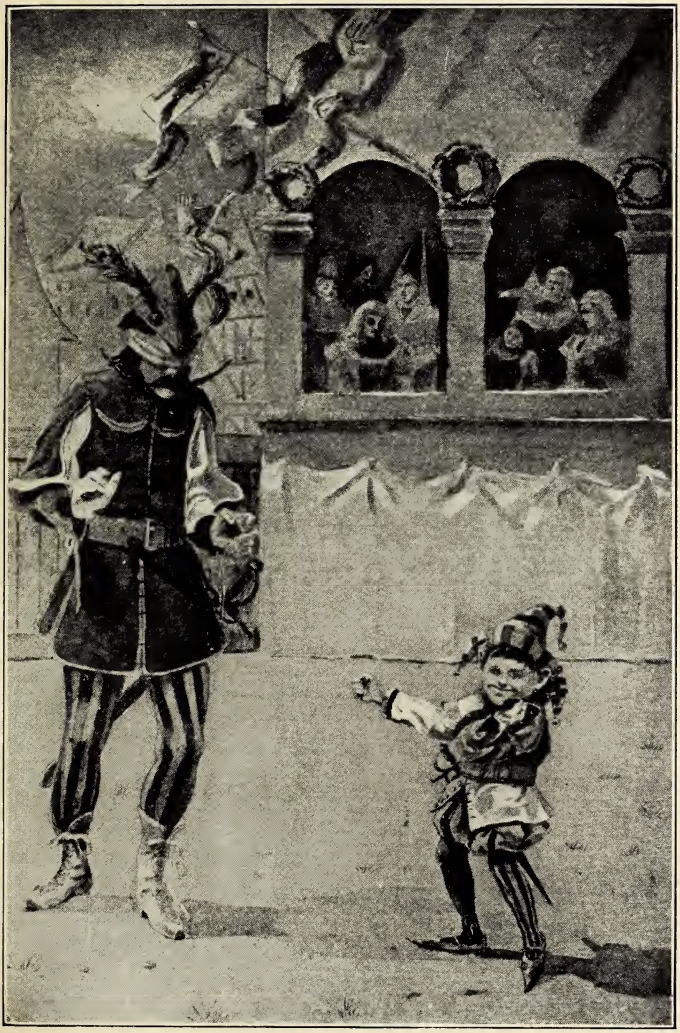
After this Giles became a force.

He shall now speak for himself.

Finding Margaret unable to believe the good news, and sceptical as to the affairs of holy Church being administered by dwarfs, he narrated as follows:

"When the princess sent for me to her bedroom as of custom, to keep her out of languor, I came not mirthful nor full of country dicts, as is my wont, but dull as lead.

"'Why, what aileth thee?' quo' she. 'Art sick?'



"MADAM," SAID GILES, "SEE YOU YON BLIND SAMSON?"

— At heart,' quo' I. 'Alas, he is in love,' quo' she. Whereat five brazen hussies, which they call them maids of honor, did giggle loud. 'Not so mad as that,' said I, 'seeing what I see at court of women folk.'

"'There, ladies,' quo' the princess, 'best let him a be. 'Tis a liberal mannikin, and still giveth more than he taketh of saucy words.'

"'In all sadness,' quo' she, 'what is the matter?'

"I told her I was meditating, and what perplexed me was, that other folk could now and then keep their word, but princes never.

"'Heyday,' says she, 'thy shafts fly high this morn.' I told her, 'Ay, for they hit the truth.'

"She said I was as keen as keen; but it became not me to put riddles to her, nor her to answer them. 'Stand aloof a bit, mesdames,' said she, 'and thou speak withouten fear;' for she saw I was in sad earnest.

"I began to quake a bit; for mind ye, she can doff freedom and don dignity quicker than she can slip out of her dressing-gown into kirtle of state. But I made my voice so soft as honey; (wherefore smilest?) and I said, 'Madam, one evening, a matter of five years agone, as ye sat with your mother, the Countess of Charolois, who is now in heaven, worse luck, you wi' your lute, and she wi' her tapestry, or the like; do ye mind there came in to ye a fair youth — with a letter from a painter body, one Margaret Van Eyck?'

"She said she thought she did. 'Was it not a tall youth, exceeding comely?'

"'Ay, madam,' said I, 'he was my brother.'

"'Your brother?' said she, and did eye me like all over. (What dost smile at?)

"So I told her all that passed between her and Gerard, and how she was for giving him a bishopric; but the good countess said, 'Gently, Marie! He is too young;'

and with that they did both promise him a living; 'Yet,' said I, 'he hath been a priest a long while, and no living. Hence my bile.'

"'Alas!' said she, 'tis not by my good will. For all this thou hast said is sooth; and more, I do remember my dear mother said to me, "See thou to it if I be not here."' So then she cried out, 'Ay, dear mother, no word of thine shall ever fall to the ground.'

"I seeing her so ripe, said quickly, 'Madam, the Vicar of Gouda died last week.' (For when ye seek favors of the great, behooves ye know the very thing ye aim at.)

"'Then thy brother is Vicar of Gouda,' quo' she, 'so sure as I am heiress of Burgundy and the Netherlands. Nay, thank me not, good Giles,' quo' she; 'but my good mother. And I do thank thee for giving of me somewhat to do for her memory.' And doesn't she fall a-weeping for her mother? and doesn't that set me off a-snivelling for my good brother that I love so dear, and to think that a poor little elf like me could yet speak in the ear of princes, and make my beautiful brother Vicar of Gouda; eh, lass, it is a bonny place, and a bonny manse, and hawthorn in every bush at spring-tide, and dog-roses and eglantine in every summer hedge. I know what the poor fool affects, leave that to me."

The dwarf began his narrative strutting to and fro before Margaret; but he ended it in her arms. For she could not contain herself, but caught him, and embraced him warmly. "O Giles," she said, blushing, and kissing him, "I cannot keep my hands off thee, thy body it is so little, and thy heart so great. Thou art his true friend. Bless thee! bless thee! bless thee! Now we shall see him again. We have not set eyes on him since that terrible day."

"Gramercy, but that is strange," said Giles. "Maybe

he is ashamed of having cursed those two vagabones, being our own flesh and blood, worse luck."

"Think you that is why he hides?" said Margaret, eagerly.

"Ay, if he is hiding at all. However, I'll cry him by bell-man."

"Nay, that might much offend him."

"What care I? Is Gouda to go vicarless, and the manse in nettles?"

And, to Margaret's secret satisfaction, Giles had the new vicar cried in Rotterdam, and the neighboring towns. He easily persuaded Margaret that, in a day or two, Gerard would be sure to hear, and come to his benefice. She went to look at his manse, and thought how comfortable it might be made for him, and how dearly she should love to do it.

But the days rolled on, and Gerard came neither to Rotterdam nor Gouda. Giles was mortified, Margaret indignant, and very wretched. She said to herself, "Thinking me dead, he comes home, and now, because I am alive, he goes back to Italy: for that is where he has gone."

Joan advised her to consult the hermit of Gouda.

"Why sure he is dead by this time."

"Yon one, belike. But the cave is never long void; Gouda ne'er wants a hermit."

But Margaret declined to go again to Gouda on such an errand. "What can he know, shut up in a cave? less than I, belike. Gerard hath gone back t' Italy. He hates me for not being dead."

Presently a Tergovian came in with a word from Catherine that Ghysbrecht Van Swieten had seen Gerard later than any one else. On this Margaret determined to go and see the house and goods that had been left her, and take Reicht Heynes home to

Rotterdam. And, as may be supposed, her steps took her first to Ghysbrecht's house. She found him in his garden, seated in a chair with wheels. He greeted her with a feeble voice, but cordially; and when she asked him whether it was true he had seen Gerard since the fifth of August, he replied, "Gerard no more, but Friar Clement. Ay, I saw him; and blessed be the day he entered my house."

He then related in his own words his interview with Clement. He told her moreover that the friar had afterwards acknowledged he came to Tergou with the missing deed in his bosom on purpose to make him disgorge her land; but that finding him disposed towards penitence, he had gone to work the other way.

"Was not this a saint; who came to right thee; but must needs save his enemy's soul in the doing it?"

To her question, whether he had recognized him, he said, "I ne'er suspected such a thing. 'Twas only when he had been three days with me that he revealed himself. Listen while I speak my shame and his praise.

"I said to him, 'The land is gone home, and my stomach feels lighter; but there is another fault that clingeth to me still;' then told I him of the letter I had writ at request of his brethren, I whose place it was to check them. Said I, 'Yon letter was writ to part true lovers, and, the devil aiding, it hath done the foul work. Land and houses I can give back; but yon mischief is done forever.'—'Nay,' quoth he, 'not forever; but for life. Repent it then while thou livest.'—'I shall,' said I, 'but how can God forgive it? I would not,' said I, 'were I He.'

"'Yet will He certainly forgive it,' quoth he; 'for He is ten times more forgiving than I am; and I forgive thee.' I stared at him; and then he said softly, but quavering like, 'Ghysbrecht, look at me closer. I am

Gerard the son of Eli.' And I looked, and looked, and at last, lo! it was Gerard. Verily I had fallen at his feet with shame and contrition; but he would not suffer me. 'That became not mine years and his, for a particular fault. I say not I forgive thee without a struggle,' said he, 'not being a saint. But these three days, thou hast spent in penitence, I have worn under thy roof in prayer: and I do forgive thee.' Those were his very words."

Margaret's tears began to flow; for it was in a broken and contrite voice the old man told her this unexpected trait in her Gerard. He continued, "And even with that he bade me farewell.

"'My work here is done now,' said he. I had not the heart to stay him; for, let him forgive me ever so, the sight of me must be wormwood to him. He left me in peace, and may a dying man's blessing wait on him, go where he will. O girl, when I think of his wrongs, and thine, and how he hath avenged himself by saving this stained soul of mine, my heart is broken with remorse, and these old eyes shed tears by night and day."

"Ghysbrecht," said Margaret, weeping, "since he hath forgiven thee, I forgive thee too; what is done, is done; and thou hast let me know this day that which I had walked the world to hear. But oh, burgomaster, thou art an understanding man, now help a poor woman, which hath forgiven thee her misery."

She then told him all that had befallen; "And," said she, "they will not keep the living for him forever. He bids fair to lose that, as well as break all our hearts."

"Call my servant," cried the burgomaster, with sudden vigor.

He sent him for a table and writing materials, and dictated letters to the burgomasters in all the principal towns in Holland, and one to a Prussian authority, his friend.

His clerk and Margaret wrote them, and he signed them. "There," said he, "the matter shall be despatched throughout Holland by trusty couriers, and as far as Basle in Switzerland; and fear not, but we will soon have the Vicar of Gouda to his village."

She went home animated with fresh hopes, and accusing herself of ingratitude to Gerard. "I value my wealth now," said she.

She also made a resolution never to blame his conduct till she should hear from his own lips his reasons.

Not long after her return from Tergou, a fresh disaster befell. Catherine, I must premise, had secret interviews with the black sheep, the very day after they were expelled; and Cornelis followed her to Tergou, and lived there on secret contributions; but Sybrandt chose to remain in Rotterdam. Ere Catherine left, she asked Margaret to lend her two gold angels; "For," said she, "all mine are spent." Margaret was delighted to lend them or give them; but the words were scarce out of her mouth, ere she caught a look of regret and distress on Kate's face, and she saw directly whither her money was going. She gave Catherine the money, and went and shut herself up with her boy. Now this money was to last Sybrandt till his mother could make some good excuse for visiting Rotterdam again; and then she would bring the idle dog some of her own industrious scrapings.

But Sybrandt, having gold in his pocket, thought it inexhaustible; and, being now under no shadow of restraint, led the life of a complete sot; until one afternoon, in a drunken frolic, he climbed on the roof of the stable at the inn he was carousing in, and proceeded to walk along it, a feat he had performed many times when sober. But now his unsteady brain made his legs unsteady, and he rolled down the roof and fell with a loud thwack on to a horizontal paling, where he hung a moment in a semi-

circle, then toppled over and lay silent on the ground, amidst roars of laughter from his boon companions.

When they came to pick him up he could not stand, but fell down giggling at each attempt.

On this they went staggering and roaring down the street with him, and carried him at great risk of another fall, to the shop in the Hoog Straet. For he had babbled his own shame all over the place.

As soon as he saw Margaret he hiccuped out, "Here is the doctor that cures all hurts; a bonny lass." He also bade her observe he bore her no malice, for he was paying her a visit, sore against his will. "Wherefore, prithee send away these drunkards; and let you and me have t'other glass, to drown all unkindness."

All this time Margaret was pale and red by turns at sight of her enemy and at his insolence. But one of the men whispered what had happened, and a streaky something in Sybrandt's face arrested her attention.

"And he cannot stand up, say you?"

"A couldn't just now. Try, comrade! Be a man now!"

"I am a better man than thou," roared Sybrandt. "I'll stand up and fight ye all for a crown."

He started to his feet, and instantly rolled into his attendant's arms with a piteous groan. He then began to curse his boon companions, and declare they had stolen away his legs. "He could feel nothing below the waist."

"Alas, poor wretch," said Margaret. She turned very gravely to the men, and said, "Leave him here. And if you have brought him to this, go on your knees; for you have spoiled him for life. He will never walk again: his back is broken."

The drunken man caught these words, and the foolish look of intoxication fled, and a glare of anguish took its place. "The curse," he groaned, "the curse!"

Margaret and Reicht Heynes carried him carefully, and laid him on the softest bed.

"I must do as *he* would do," whispered Margaret. "He was kind to Ghysbrecht."

Her opinion was verified. Sybrandt's spine was fatally injured; and he lay groaning and helpless, fed and tended by her he had so deeply injured.

The news was sent to Tergou; and Catherine came over.

It was a terrible blow to her. Moreover she accused herself as the cause. "O false wife, O weak mother," she cried. "I am rightly punished for my treason to my poor Eli."

She sat for hours at a time by his bedside rocking herself in silence, and was never quite herself again; and the first gray hairs began to come in her poor head from that hour.

As for Sybrandt, all his cry was now for Gerard. He used to whine to Margaret like a suffering hound, "O sweet Margaret, O bonny Margaret, for our Lady's sake find Gerard, and bid him take his curse off me. Thou art gentle, thou art good; thou wilt entreat for me, and he will refuse thee nought." Catherine shared his belief that Gerard could cure him, and joined her entreaties to his. Margaret hardly needed this. The burgomaster and his agents having failed, she employed her own, and spent money like water. And among these agents poor Luke enrolled himself. She met him one day looking very thin, and spoke to him compassionately. On this he began to blubber, and say he was more miserable than ever; he would like to be good friends again upon almost any terms.

"Dear heart," said Margaret, sorrowfully, "why can you not say to yourself, Now I am her little brother, and she is my old married sister, worn down with care? Say

so, and I will indulge thee, and pet thee, and make thee happier than a prince."

"Well, I will," said Luke, savagely, "sooner than keep away from you altogether. But above all give me something to do. Perchance I may have better luck this time."

"Get me my marriage lines," said Margaret, turning sad and gloomy in a moment.

"That is as much as to say, get me *him!* for where they are, he is."

"Not so. He may refuse to come nigh me; but certes he will not deny a poor woman, who loved him once, her lines of betrothal. How can she go without them into any honest man's house?"

"I'll get them you if they are in Holland," said Luke.

"They are as like to be in Rome," replied Margaret.

"Let us begin with Holland," observed Luke, prudently.

The slave of love was furnished with money by his soft tyrant, and wandered hither and thither, coopering and carpentering, and looking for Gerard. "I can't be worse if I find the vagabone," said he, "and I may be a hantle better."

The months rolled on, and Sybrandt improved in spirit, but not in body; he was Margaret's pensioner for life; and a long-expected sorrow fell upon poor Catherine, and left her still more bowed down, and she lost her fine hearty bustling way, and never went about the house singing now; and her nerves were shaken, and she lived in dread of some terrible misfortune falling on Cornelis. The curse was laid on him as well as Sybrandt.

She prayed Eli, if she had been a faithful partner all these years, to take Cornelis into his house again; and let her live awhile at Rotterdam.

"I have good daughters here," said she; "but Margaret is so tender and thoughtful, and the little Gerard, he is

my joy; he grows liker his father every day, and his prattle cheers my heavy heart; and I do love children."

And Eli, sturdy but kindly, consented sorrowfully.

And the people of Gouda petitioned the duke for a vicar, a real vicar. "Ours cometh never nigh us," said they, "this six months past; our children they die unchristened, and our folk unburied, except by some chance comer." Giles's influence baffled this just complaint once; but a second petition was prepared, and he gave Margaret little hope that the present position could be maintained a single day.

So then Margaret went sorrowfully to the pretty manse to see it for the last time, ere it should pass forever into a stranger's hands.

"I think he would have been happy here," she said, and turned heartsick away.

On their return, Reicht Heynes proposed to her to go and consult the hermit.

"What," said Margaret, "Joan has been at you. She is the one for hermits. I'll go, if 'tis but to show thee they know no more than we do." And they went to the cave.

It was an excavation partly natural, partly artificial, in a bank of rock overgrown by brambles. There was a rough stone door on hinges, and a little window high up, and two apertures, through one of which the people announced their gifts to the hermit, and put questions of all sorts to him; and, when he chose to answer, his voice came dissonant and monstrous out at another small aperture.

On the face of the rock this line was cut: —

Felix qui in Domino nixus ab orbe fugit.

Margaret observed to her companion that this was new since she was here last.

"Ay," said Reicht, "like enough," and looked up at it with awe. Writing even on paper she thought no trifle; but on rock!

She whispered, "'Tis a far holier hermit than the last; he used to come in the town now and then; but this one ne'er shows his face to mortal man."

"And that is holiness?"

"Ay, sure."

"Then what a saint a dormouse must be!"

"Out, fie, mistress. Would ye even a beast to a man?"

"Come, Reicht," said Margaret, "my poor father taught me overmuch. So I will e'en sit here, and look at the manse once more. Go thou forward and question thy solitary, and tell me whether ye get nought or nonsense out of him; for 'twill be one."

As Reicht drew near the cave, a number of birds flew out of it. She gave a little scream, and pointed to the cave to show Margaret they had come thence. On this Margaret felt sure there was no human being in the cave, and gave the matter no further attention. She fell into a deep reverie while looking at the little manse.

She was startled from it by Reicht's hand upon her shoulder, and a faint voice saying, "Let us go home."

"You got no answer at all, Reicht," said Margaret, calmly.

"No, Margaret," said Reicht, despondently. And they returned home.

Perhaps after all Margaret had nourished some faint secret hope in her heart, though her reason had rejected it; for she certainly went home more dejectedly.

Just as they entered Rotterdam, Reicht said, "Stay! O Margaret, I am ill at deceit; but 'tis death to utter ill news to thee; I love thee so dear."

"Speak out, sweetheart," said Margaret. "I have gone through so much, I am almost past feeling any fresh trouble."

"Margaret, the hermit did speak to me."

"What, a hermit there? among all those birds."

"Ay; and doth not that show him a holy man?"

"I' God's name, what said he to thee, Reicht?"

"Alas! Margaret, I told him thy story, and I prayed him for our Lady's sake, tell me where thy Gerard is. And I waited long for an answer, and presently a voice came like a trumpet: 'Pray for the soul of Gerard, the son of Eli!'"

"Ah!"

"Oh, woe is me that I have this to tell thee, sweet Margaret! bethink thee thou hast thy boy to live for yet."

"Let me get home," said Margaret faintly.

Passing down the Brede Kirk Straet they saw Joan at the door.

Reicht said to her, "Eh, woman, she has been to your hermit, and heard no good news."

"Come in," said Joan, eager for a gossip.

Margaret would not go in. But she sat down disconsolate on the lowest step but one of the little external staircase that led into Joan's house; and let the other two gossip their fill at the top of it.

"Oh," said Joan, "what yon hermit says is sure to be sooth. He is that holy, I am told, that the very birds consort with him."

"What does that prove?" said Margaret, deprecatingly. "I have seen my Gerard tame the birds in winter till they would eat from his hand."

A look of pity at this parallel passed between the other two. But they were both too fond of her to say what they thought. Joan proceeded to relate all the marvellous tales she had heard of this hermit's sanctity. How he never came out but at night, and prayed among the wolves, and they never molested him: and how he

bade the people not bring him so much food to pamper his body, but to bring him candles.

"The candles are to burn before his saint," whispered Reicht solemnly.

"Ay, lass; and to read his holy books wi'. A neighbor o' mine saw his hand come out, and the birds sat thereon and pecked crumbs. She went for to kiss it; but the holy man whippit it away in a trice. They can't abide a woman to touch 'em, or even look at 'em, saints can't."

"What like was his hand, wife? Did you ask her?"

"What is my tongue for, else? Why, dear heart, all one as ourn; by the same token a had a thumb and four fingers."

"Look ye there now."

"But a deal whiter nor yourn and mine."

"Ay, ay."

"And main skinny."

"Alas."

"What could ye expect? Why, a live upon air, and prayer: and candles."

"Ah, well," continued Joan, "poor thing, I whiles think 'tis best for her to know the worst. And now she hath gotten a voice from heaven, or almost as good: and behooves her pray for his soul. One thing, she is not so poor now as she was; and never fell riches to a better hand; and she is only come into her own for that matter: so she can pay the priest to say masses for him, and that is a great comfort."

In the midst of their gossip, Margaret, in whose ears it was all buzzing, though she seemed lost in thought, got softly up; and crept away with her eyes on the ground, and her brows bent.

"She hath forgotten I am with her," said Reicht Heynes ruefully.

She had her gossip out with Joan, and then went home.

She found Margaret seated cutting out a pelisse of gray cloth, and a cape to match. Little Gerard was standing at her side, inside her left arm, eying the work, and making it more difficult by wriggling about, and fingering the arm with which she held the cloth steady; to all which she submitted with imperturbable patience and complacency. Fancy a male workman so entangled, impeded, worried!

"Ot's that, mammy?"

"A pelisse, my pet."

"Ot's a p'lisse?"

"A great frock. And this is the cape to't."

"Ot's it for?"

"To keep his body from the cold; and the cape is for his shoulders, or to go over his head like the country folk. 'Tis for a hermit."

"Ot's a 'ermit?"

"A holy man that lives in a cave all by himself."

"In de dark?"

"Ay, whiles."

"Oh."

In the morning Reicht was sent to the hermit with the pelisse, and a pound of thick candles.

As she was going out of the door, Margaret said to her, "Said you whose son Gerard was?"

"Nay, not I."

"Think, girl! How could he call him, Gerard, son of Eli, if you had not told him?"

Reicht persisted she had never mentioned him but as plain Gerard. But Margaret told her flatly she did not believe her; at which Reicht was affronted, and went out with a little toss of the head. However she determined to question the hermit again, and did not doubt

he would be more liberal in his communication, when he saw his nice new pelisse and the candles.

She had not been gone long when Giles came in with ill news. The living of Gouda would be kept vacant no longer.

Margaret was greatly distressed at this. "O Giles," said she, "ask for another month. They will give thee another month, maybe."

He returned in an hour to tell her he could not get a month. "They have given me a week," said he. "And what is a week?"

"Drowning bodies catch at strawen," was her reply. "A week? a little week?"

Reicht came back from her errand out of spirits. Her oracle had declined all further communication. So at least its obstinate silence might fairly be interpreted.

The next day Margaret put Reicht in charge of the shop, and disappeared all day. So the next day; and so the next. Nor would she tell any one where she had been. Perhaps she was ashamed. The fact is, she spent all those days on one little spot of ground. When they thought her dreaming, she was applying to every word that fell from Joan and Reicht the whole powers of a far acuter mind than either of them possessed.

She went to work on a scale that never occurred to either of them. She was determined to see the hermit, and question him face to face, not through a wall. She found that by making a circuit she could get above the cave, and look down without being seen by the solitary. But when she came to do it, she found an impenetrable mass of brambles. After tearing her clothes, and her hands and feet, so that she was soon covered with blood, the resolute, patient girl took out her scissors and steadily snipped and cut till she made a narrow path through the enemy. But so slow was the work, that she had to leave

it half done. The next day she had her scissors fresh ground, and brought a sharp knife as well; and gently, silently, cut her way to the roof of the cave. There she made an ambush of some of the cut brambles, so that the passers-by might not see her, and couched with watchful eye till the hermit should come out. She heard him move underneath her. But he never left his cell. She began to think it was true that he only came out at night. The next day she came early, and brought a jerkin she was making for little Gerard, and there she sat all day, working and watching with dogged patience.

At four o'clock the birds began to feed; and a great many of the smaller kinds came fluttering round the cave, and one or two went in. But most of them, taking a preliminary seat on the bushes, suddenly discovered Margaret, and went off with an agitated flirt of their little wings. And although they sailed about in the air, they would not enter the cave. Presently, to encourage them, the hermit, all unconscious of the cause of their tremors, put out a thin white hand with a few crumbs in it. Margaret laid down her work softly, and gliding her body forward like a snake, looked down at it from above: it was but a few feet from her. It was as the woman described it, a thin, white hand.

Presently the other hand came out with a piece of bread, and the two hands together broke it and scattered the crumbs.

But that other hand had hardly been out two seconds ere the violet eyes that were watching above, dilated; and the gentle bosom heaved, and the whole frame quivered like a leaf in the wind.

What her swift eye had seen, I leave the reader to guess. She suppressed the scream that rose to her lips; but the effort cost her dear. Soon the left hand of the hermit began to swim indistinctly before her gloating

eyes: and with a deep sigh her head drooped, and she lay like a broken lily.

She was in a deep swoon, to which perhaps her long fast to-day, and the agitation and sleeplessness of many preceding days contributed.

And there lay beauty, intelligence, and constancy: pale and silent. And little that hermit guessed who was so near him. The little birds hopped on her now: and one nearly entangled his little feet in her rich auburn hair.

She came back to her troubles. The sun was set. She was very cold. She cried a little; but I think it was partly from the remains of physical weakness. And then she went home, praying God and the saints to enlighten her and teach her what to do for the best.

When she got home she was pale and hysterical, and would say nothing in answer to all their questions but her favorite word, "We are wading in deep waters."

The night seemed to have done wonders for her.

She came to Catherine, who was sitting sighing by the fireside, and kissed her, and said, "Mother, what would you like best in the world?"

"Eh, dear," replied Catherine, despondently. "I know nought that would make me smile now; I have parted from too many that were dear to me. Gerard lost again as soon as found. Kate in heaven; and Sybrandt down for life."

"Poor mother! Mother dear, Gouda manse is to be furnished, and cleaned, and made ready all in a hurry. See, here be ten gold angels. Make them go far, good mother; for I have ta'en over many already from my boy, for a set of useless loons that were aye going to find him for me."

Catherine and Reicht stared at her a moment in silence; and then out burst a flood of questions, to none

of which would she give a reply. "Nay," said she, "I have lain on my bed, and thought, and thought, and thought, whiles you were all sleeping; and methinks I have got the clew to all. I love you, dear mother; but I'll trust no woman's tongue. If I fail this time, I'll have none to blame but Margaret Brandt."

A resolute woman is a very resolute thing. And there was a deep, dogged determination in Margaret's voice and brow, that at once convinced Catherine it would be idle to put any more questions at that time. She and Reicht lost themselves in conjectures; and Catherine whispered Reicht, "Bide quiet; then 'twill leak out;" a shrewd piece of advice, founded on general observation.

Within an hour Catherine was on the road to Gouda in a cart, with two stout girls to help her, and quite a siege artillery of mops, and pails, and brushes. She came back with heightened color, and something of the old sparkle in her eye, and kissed Margaret with a silent warmth that spoke volumes; and at five in the morning was off again to Gouda.

That night as Reicht was in her first sleep, a hand gently pressed her shoulder, and she awoke, and was going to scream.

"Whisht," said Margaret, and put her finger to her lips.

She then whispered, "Rise softly, don thy habits, and come with me!"

When she came down, Margaret begged her to loose Dragon and bring him along. Now Dragon was a great mastiff, who had guarded Margaret Van Eyck and Reicht, two lone women, for some years, and was devotedly attached to the latter.

Margaret and Reicht went out, with Dragon walking majestically behind them. They came back long after midnight, and retired to rest.

Catherine never knew.

Margaret read her friends. She saw the sturdy, faithful Frisian could hold her tongue, and Catherine could not. Yet I am not sure she would have trusted even Reicht, had her nerve equalled her spirit; but with all her daring and resolution, she was a tender, timid woman, a little afraid of the dark, very afraid of being alone in it, and desperately afraid of wolves. Now Dragon could kill a wolf in a brace of shakes; but then Dragon would not go with her, but only with Reicht. So altogether she made one confidante.

The next night they made another moonlight reconnoissance, and, as I think, with some result. For not the next night (it rained that night and extinguished their courage), but the next after, they took with them a companion; the last in the world Reicht Heynes would have thought of; yet she gave her warm approval as soon as she was told he was to go with them.

Imagine how these stealthy assailants trembled and panted, when the moment of action came; imagine, if you can, the tumult in Margaret's breast, the thrilling hopes chasing, and chased by, sickening fears; the strange and perhaps unparalleled mixture of tender familiarity and distant awe, with which a lovely and high-spirited, but tender, adoring woman, wife in the eye of the law, and no wife in the eye of the Church, trembling, blushing, paling, glowing, shivering, stole at night, noiseless as the dew, upon the hermit of Gouda.

And the stars above seemed never so bright and calm.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Yes, the hermit of Gouda was the vicar of Gouda, and knew it not, so absolute was his seclusion.

My reader is aware that the moment the frenzy of his passion passed, he was seized with remorse for having been betrayed into it. But perhaps only those who have risen as high in religious spirit as he had, and suddenly fallen, can realize the terror at himself that took possession of him. He felt like one whom self-confidence had betrayed to the very edge of a precipice. "Ah, good Jerome," he cried, "how much better you knew me than I knew myself! How bitter yet wholesome was your admonition!"

Accustomed to search his own heart, he saw at once that the true cause of his fury was Margaret. "I love her, then, better than God," said he, despairingly; "better than the Church. From such a love what can spring to me, or to her?" He shuddered at the thought. "Let the strong battle temptation; 'tis for the weak to flee. And who is weaker than I have shown myself? What is my penitence, my religion? A pack of cards built by degrees into a fair-seeming structure; and, lo! one breath of earthly love, and it lies in the dust. I must begin again, and on a surer foundation." He resolved to leave Holland at once, and spend years of his life in some distant convent before returning to it. By that time the temptations of earthly passion would be doubly baffled; an older and a better monk, he should be more master of his earthly affections, and Margaret, seeing herself abandoned, would marry, and love another.

The very anguish this last thought cost him showed the self-searcher and self-denier, that he was on the path of religious duty.

But in leaving her for his immortal good and hers, he was not to neglect her temporal weal. Indeed, the sweet thought, he could make her comfortable for life, and rich in this world's goods, which she was not bound to despise, sustained him in the bitter struggle it cost him to turn his back on her without one kind word or look. "Oh, what will she think of me?" he groaned. "Shall I not seem to her of all creatures the most heartless, inhuman? but so best; ay, better she should hate me, miserable that I am. Heaven is merciful, and giveth my broken heart this comfort; I can make that villain restore her own, and she shall never lose another true lover by poverty. Another? Ah me! ah me! God and the saints to mine aid!"

How he fared on this errand has been related. But first, as you may perhaps remember, he went at night to shrive the hermit of Gouda. He found him dying, and never left him till he had closed his eyes and buried him beneath the floor of the little oratory attached to his cell. It was the peaceful end of a stormy life. The hermit had been a soldier, and even now carried a steel corselet next his skin, saying he was now Christ's soldier as he had been Satan's. When Clement had shriven him and prayed by him, he, in his turn, sought counsel of one who was dying in so pious a frame. The hermit advised him to be his successor in this peaceful retreat. "His had been a hard fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and he had never thoroughly baffled them till he retired into the citadel of Solitude."

These words and the hermit's pious and peaceful death, which speedily followed, and set as it were the seal of immortal truth on them, made a deep impression

upon Clement. Nor in his case had they any prejudice to combat; the solitary recluse was still profoundly revered in the Church, whether immured as an anchorite, or anchoress, in some cave or cell belonging to a monastery, or hidden in the more savage but laxer seclusion of the independent hermitage. And Clement knew more about the hermits of the Church than most divines at his time of life; he had read much thereon at the monastery near Tergou; had devoured their lives with wonder and delight in the manuscripts of the Vatican, and conversed earnestly about them with the mendicant friars of several nations. Before printing, these friars were the great circulators of those local annals and biographies which accumulated in the convents of every land. Then his teacher, Jerome, had been three years an anchorite on the heights of Camaldoli, where for more than four centuries the Thebaid had been revived; and Jerome, cold and curt on most religious themes, was warm with enthusiasm on this one. He had pored over the annals of St. John Baptist's abbey, round about which the hermits' caves were scattered, and told him the names of many a noble, and many a famous warrior, who had ended his days there a hermit, and of many a bishop and archbishop who had passed from the see to the hermitage, or from the hermitage to the see. Among the former the archbishop of Ravenna; among the latter Pope Victor the Ninth. He told him too, with grim delight, of their multifarious austerities, and how each hermit set himself to find where he was weakest, and attacked himself without mercy or remission till there, even there, he was strongest. And how seven times in the twenty-four hours, in thunder, rain, or snow, by daylight, twilight, moonlight, or torchlight, the solitaries flocked from distant points, over rugged precipitous ways, to worship in the convent church; at matins, at

prime, tierce, sexte, nones, vespers, and complin. He even, under eager questioning, described to him the persons of famous anchorites he had sung the Psalter and prayed with there; the only intercourse their vows allowed, except with special permission. Moncata, Duke of Moncata and Cardova, and Hidalgo of Spain, who in the flower of his youth had retired thither from the pomps, vanities, and pleasures of the world; Father John Baptist of Novara, who had led armies to battle, but was now a private soldier of Christ; Cornelius, Samuel, and Sylvanus. This last, when the great Duchess de' Medici obtained the Pope's leave, hitherto refused, to visit Camaldoli, went down and met her at the first wooden cross, and there, surrounded as she was with courtiers and flatterers, remonstrated with her and persuaded her, and warned her, not to profane that holy mountain, where no woman for so many centuries had placed her foot; and she, awed by the place and the man, retreated with all her captains, soldiers, courtiers, and pages, from that one hoary hermit. At Basle Clement found fresh materials, especially with respect to German and English anchorites; and he had even prepared a *Catena Eremitarum* from the year of our Lord 250, when Paul of Thebes commenced his ninety years of solitude, down to the year 1470. He called them *Angelorum amici et animalium*, i.e., "Friends of Angels and animals."

Thus, though in those days he never thought to be a recluse, the road was paved, so to speak; and when the dying hermit of Gouda blessed the citadel of Solitude, where he had fought the good fight and won it, and invited him to take up the breastplate of faith, that now fell off his own shrunken body, Clement said within himself: "Heaven itself led my foot hither to this end." It struck him too, as no small coincidence, that his

patron, St. Bavon, was a hermit, and an austere one, a cuirassier [1] of the solitary cell.

As soon as he was reconciled to Ghysbrecht Van Swieten, he went eagerly to his new abode, praying Heaven it might not have been already occupied in these three days. The fear was not vain; these famous dens never wanted a human tenant long. He found the rude stone door ajar; then he made sure he was too late; he opened the door and went softly in. No; the cell was vacant, and there were the hermit's great ivory crucifix, his pens, ink, seeds, and *memento mori*, a skull; his cilice of hair, and another of bristles; his well-worn sheepskin pelisse and hood, his hammer, chisel, and psaltery, etc. Men and women had passed that way, but none had ventured to intrude, far less to steal. Faith and simplicity had guarded that keyless door more securely than the houses of the laity were defended by their gates like a modern jail, and thick iron bars at every window, and the gentry by moat, bastion, *chevaux de frise*, and portcullis.

As soon as Clement was fairly in the cell there was a loud flap, and a flutter, and down came a great brown owl from a corner, and whirled out of the window, driving the air cold on Clement's face. He started, and shuddered.

Was this seeming owl something diabolical? trying to deter him from his soul's good? On second thoughts, might it not be some good spirit the hermit had employed to keep the cell for him, perhaps the hermit himself? Finally he concluded that it was just an owl; and that he would try and make friends with it.

He kneeled down and inaugurated his new life with prayer.

Clement had not only an earthly passion to quell, the

[1] "Loricatus," vide Ducange, in voce.

power of which made him tremble for his eternal weal, but he had a penance to do for having given way to ire, his besetting sin, and cursed his own brothers.

He looked round this roomy cell furnished with so many comforts, and compared it with the pictures in his mind of the hideous place, *eremus in eremo,* a desert in a desert, where holy Jerome, hermit, and the Plutarch of hermits, had wrestled with sickness, temptation, and despair, four mortal years; and with the inaccessible and thorny niche, a hole in a precipice, where the boy hermit Benedict buried himself, and lived three years on the pittance the good monk Romanus could spare him from his scanty commons; and subdivided that mouthful with his friend, a raven; and the hollow tree of his patron St. Bavon, and the earthly purgatory at Fribourg, where lived a nameless saint in a horrid cavern, his eyes chilled with perpetual gloom, and his ears stunned with an eternal waterfall; and the pillar on which St. Simeon Stylita existed forty-five years, and the destina, or stone box, of St. Dunstan, where, like Hilarion in his bulrush hive, *sepulchro potius quam domu,* he could scarce sit, stand, or lie; and the living tombs, sealed with lead, of Thais, and Christina, and other recluses; and the damp dungeon of St. Alred. These and scores more of the dismal dens in which true hermits had worn out their wasted bodies on the rock, and the rock under their sleeping bodies, and their praying knees, all came into his mind, and he said to himself, "This sweet retreat is for safety of the soul; but what for penance? Jesu, aid me against faults to come; and for the fault I rue, face of man I will not see for a twelvemonth and a day." He had famous precedents in his eye even for this last and unusual severity. In fact, the original hermit of this very cell was clearly under the same vow. Hence the two apertures through which he was spoken to, and replied.

Adopting, in other respects, the uniform rule of hermits and anchorites, he divided his day into the seven offices, ignoring the petty accidents of light and dark, creations both of Him to whom he prayed so unceasingly. He learned the Psalter by heart, and in all the intervals of devotion, not occupied by broken slumbers, he worked hard with his hands. No article of the hermit's rule was more strict or more ancient than this. And here his self-imposed penance embarrassed him, for what work could he do, without being seen, that should benefit his neighbors? for the hermit was to labor *for himself* in those cases only where his subsistence depended on it. Now Clement's modest needs were amply supplied by the villagers.

On moonlight nights he would steal out like a thief, and dig some poor man's garden on the outskirts of the village. He made baskets and dropped them slyly at humble doors.

And since he could do nothing for the bodies of those who passed by his cell in daytime, he went out in the dead of the night with his hammer and his chisel, and carved moral and religious sentences all down the road upon the sandstone rocks. "Who knows?" said he, "often a chance shaft striketh home. O sore heart, comfort thou the poor and bereaved with holy words of solace in their native tongue; for *he* said well, 'tis '*clavis ad corda plebis.*'" Also he remembered the learned Colonna had told him of the written mountains in the East where kings had inscribed their victories. "What," said Clement, "are they so wise, those Eastern monarchs, to engrave their warlike glory upon the rock, making a blood bubble endure so long as earth; and shall I leave the rocks about me silent on the King of Glory, at whose word they were, and at whose breath they shall be dust? Nay, but these stones shall speak to weary

wayfarers of eternal peace, and of the Lamb whose frail, and afflicted, yet happy servant worketh them among."

Now at this time the inspired words that have consoled the poor and the afflicted for so many ages, were not yet printed in Dutch, so that these sentences of gold from the holy Evangelists came like fresh oracles from heaven, or like the dew on parched flowers; and the poor hermit's written rocks softened a heart or two, and sent the heavy laden singing on their way.[1]

These holy oracles that seemed to spring up around him like magic; his prudent answers through his window to such as sought ghostly counsel; and, above all, his invisibility, soon gained him a prodigious reputation. This was not diminished by the medical advice they now and then extorted from him, sore against his will, by tears and entreaties; for if the patients got well, they gave the holy hermit the credit, and, if not, they laid all the blame on the devil. I think he killed nobody, for his remedies were "womanish and weak." Sage, and wormwood, sion, hyssop, borage, spikenard, dog's-tongue, our Lady's mantle, feverfew, and faith, and all in small quantities except the last.

Then his abstinence, sure sign of a saint. The eggs and milk they brought him at first he refused with horror. Know ye not the hermit's rule is bread, or herbs, and water? Eggs, they are birds in disguise; for when the bird dieth then the egg rotteth. As for milk, it is little better than white blood. And when they brought him too much bread he refused it. Then they used to press it on him. "Nay, holy father; give the overplus to the poor."

"You who go among the poor can do that better. Is

[1] It requires nowadays a strong effort of the imagination to realize the effect on poor people who had never seen them before, of such sentences as this, "Blessed are the poor," etc.

bread a thing to fling hap-hazard from an hermit's window?" And to those who persisted after this: "To live on charity, yet play Sir Bountiful, is to lie with the right hand. Giving another's to the poor, I should beguile them of their thanks, and cheat thee the true giver. Thus do thieves, whose boast it is they bleed the rich into the lap of the poor. *Occasio avaritiæ nomen pauperum.*"

When nothing else would convince the good souls, this piece of Latin always brought them round. So would a line of Virgil's Æneid.

This great reputation of sanctity was all external. Inside the cell was a man who held the hermit of Gouda as cheap as dirt.

"Ah!" said he, "I cannot deceive myself; I cannot deceive God's animals. See the little birds, how coy they be! I feed and feed them and long for their friendship, yet will they never come within, nor take my hand, by lighting on't. For why? No Paul, no Benedict, no Hugh of Lincoln, no Columba, no Guthlac, bides in this cell. Hunted doe flieth not hither, for here is no Fructuosus, nor Aventine, nor Albert of Suabia; nor e'en a pretty squirrel cometh from the wood hard by for the acorns I have hoarded; for here abideth no Columban. The very owl that was here hath fled. They are not to be deceived; I have a Pope's word for that; Heaven rest his soul."

Clement had one advantage over her, whose image in his heart he was bent on destroying.

He had suffered and survived the pang of bereavement; and the mind cannot quite repeat such anguish. Then he had built up a habit of looking on her as dead. After that strange scene in the church and churchyard of St. Laurens, that habit might be compared to a structure riven by a thunderbolt. It was shattered, but

stones enough stood to found a similar habit on; to look on her as dead *to him.*

And, by severe subdivision of his time and thoughts, by unceasing prayers, and manual labor, he did, in about three months, succeed in benumbing the earthly half of his heart.

But lo! within a day or two of this first symptom of mental peace returning slowly, there descended upon his mind a horrible despondency.

Words cannot utter it; for words never yet painted a likeness of despair. Voices seemed to whisper in his ear, "Kill thyself! kill! kill! kill!"

And he longed to obey the voices; for life was intolerable. He wrestled with his dark enemy with prayers and tears; he prayed God but to vary his temptation. "Oh, let mine enemy have power to scourge me with red-hot whips, to tear me leagues and leagues over rugged places by the hair of my head, as he has served many a holy hermit, that yet baffled him at last; to fly on me like a raging lion; to gnaw me with a serpent's fangs: any pain, any terror, but this horrible gloom of the soul that shuts me from all light of Thee and of the saints."

And now a freezing thought crossed him. What if the triumphs of the powers of darkness over Christian souls in desert places, had been suppressed; and only their defeats recorded, or at least in full: for dark hints were scattered about antiquity that now first began to grin at him with terrible meaning.

"They wandered in the desert and perished by serpents," said an ancient father, of hermits that went into solitude, "and were seen no more." And another at a more recent epoch, wrote: "*Vertuntur ad melancholiam;*" "they turn to gloomy madness." These two statements were they not one? for the ancient fathers never spoke with regret of the death of the body. No, the hermits

so lost were perished souls, and the serpents were diabolical[1] thoughts, the natural brood of solitude.

St. Jerome went into the desert with three companions; one fled in the first year; two died: how? The single one that lasted, was a gigantic soul with an iron body.

The contemporary who related this made no comment: expressed no wonder. What then if here was a glimpse of the true proportion in every age, and many souls had always been lost in solitude for one gigantic mind and iron body that survived this terrible ordeal?

The darkened recluse now cast his despairing eyes over antiquity to see what weapons the Christian arsenal contained, that might befriend him. The greatest of all was prayer. Alas! it was a part of his malady to be unable to pray with true fervor. The very system of mechanical supplication he had for months carried out so severely by rule had rather checked than fostered his power of originating true prayer.

He prayed louder than ever, but the heart hung back cold and gloomy, and let the words go up alone.

"Poor wingless prayers," he cried; "you will not get half way to heaven."

A fiend of this complexion had been driven out of King Saul by music.

Clement took up the hermit's psaltery, and with much trouble mended the strings and tuned it.

No, he could not play it. His soul was so out of tune. The sounds jarred on it, and made him almost mad.

"Ah, wretched me!" he cried. "Saul had a saint to play to him. He was not alone with the spirits of darkness; but here is no sweet bard of Israel to play to me;

[1] The primitive writer was so interpreted by others besides Clement; and, in particular by Peter of Blois, a divine of the twelfth century, whose comment is noteworthy, as he himself was a forty-year hermit.

I, lonely, with crushed heart, on which a black fiend sitteth mountain high, must make the music to uplift that heart to heaven; it may not be." And he grovelled on the earth weeping and tearing his hair.

Vertebatur ad melancholiam.

CHAPTER XLIV.

One day as he lay there sighing, and groaning, prayerless, tuneless, hopeless, a thought flashed into his mind. What he had done for the poor and the wayfarer, he would do for himself. He would fill his den of despair with the name of God and the magic words of Holy Writ, and the pious, prayerful consolations of the Church.

Then, like Christian at Apollyon's feet, he reached his hand suddenly out and caught, not his sword, for he had none, but peaceful labor's humbler weapon, his chisel, and worked with it as if his soul depended on his arm.

They say that Michael Angelo in the next generation used to carve statues, not like our timid sculptors, by modelling the work in clay, and then setting a mechanic to chisel it; but would seize the block, conceive the image, and, at once, with mallet and steel make the marble chips fly like mad about him, and the mass sprout into form. Even so Clement drew no lines to guide his hand. He went to his memory for the gracious words, and then dashed at his work and eagerly graved them in the soft stone, between working and fighting.

He begged his visitors for candle ends, and rancid oil. "Anything is good enough for *me*," he said, "if 'twill but burn." So at night the cave glowed afar off like a blacksmith's forge, through the window and the gaping chinks of the rude stone door, and the rustics beholding crossed themselves and suspected deviltries, and, within, the holy talismans one after another came upon the walls, and the sparks and the chips flew day and night, night and day, as the soldier of Solitude and of the Church

plied, with sighs and groans, his bloodless weapon, between working and fighting.

Kyrie Eleeison.
Christe Eleeison.

Τον Σαταναν συντριψον ὑπο τους ποδας ἡμων.[1]

Sursum corda.[2]

Deus Refugium nostrum et virtus.[3]

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere mihi.[4]

Sancta Trinitas unus Deus, miserere nobis.[5]

Ab infestationibus Dæmonum, a ventura ira, a damnatione perpetua, — Libera nos Domine.[6]

Deus, qui miro ordine Angelorum ministeria, etc. (the whole collect).[7]

Quem quærimus adjutorem nisi te Domine, qui pro peccatis nostris juste irascaris?[8]

Sancte Deus, Sancte fortis, Sancte et misericors Salvator, amaræ morti ne tradas nos.

And underneath the great crucifix, which was fastened to the wall, he graved this from Augustine:—

O anima Christiana, respice vulnera patientis, sanguinem morientis, pretium redemptionis. Hæc quanta sint cogitate, et in statera mentis vestræ appendite, ut totus vobis figatur in corde, qui pro vobis totus fixus est in cruce. Nam, si passio Christi ad memoriam revocetur, nihil est tam durum quod non æquo animo toleretur.

[1] Beat down Satan under our feet.

[2] Up, hearts!

[3] O God our refuge and strength.

[4] O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me!

[5] O Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy upon us.

[6] From the assaults of demons, — from the wrath to come, — from everlasting damnation — Deliver us, O Lord!

[7] See the English collect, St. Michael and all Angels.

[8] Of whom may we seek succor, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased (and that torrent of prayer, the following verse).

Which may be thus rendered: —

O Christian soul, look on the wounds of the suffering One, the blood of the dying One, the price paid for our redemption! These things, oh think how great they be, and weigh them in the balance of thy mind: that He may be wholly nailed to thy heart, who for thee was all nailed unto the cross. For do but call to mind the sufferings of Christ, and there is nought on earth too hard to endure with composure.

Soothed a little, a very little, by the sweet and pious words he was raising all round him, and weighed down with watching and working night and day, Clement one morning sank prostrate with fatigue; and a deep sleep overpowered him for many hours.

Awaking quietly, he heard a little cheep; he opened his eyes, and, lo! upon his breviary, which was on a low stool near his feet, ruffling all his feathers with a single pull, and smoothing them as suddenly, and cocking his bill this way and that with a vast display of cunning purely imaginary, perched a robin redbreast.

Clement held his breath.

He half closed his eyes lest they should frighten the airy guest.

Down came robin on the floor.

When there he went through his pantomime of astuteness; and then, pim, pim, pim, with three stiff little hops, like a ball of worsted on vertical wires, he was on the hermit's bare foot. On this eminence he swelled and contracted again, with ebb and flow of feathers; but Clement lost this, for he quite closed his eyes and scarce drew his breath in fear of frightening and losing his visitor. He was content to feel the minute claw on his foot. He could but just feel it, and that by help of knowing it was there.

Presently a little flirt with two little wings, and the feathered busybody was on the breviary again.

Then Clement determined to try and feed this pretty little fidget without frightening it away. But it was very difficult. He had a piece of bread within reach, but how get at it? I think he was five minutes creeping his hand up to that bread, and when there he must not move his arm.

He slyly got a crumb between a finger and thumb and shot it as boys do marbles, keeping the hand quite still.

Cock-robin saw it fall near him, and did sagacity, but moved not.

When another followed, and then another: he popped down and caught up one of the crumbs, but not quite understanding this mystery fled with it, for more security, to an eminence; to wit the hermit's knee.

And so the game proceeded till a much larger fragment than usual rolled along.

Here was a prize. Cock-robin pounced on it, bore it aloft and fled so swiftly into the world with it, the cave resounded with the buffeted air.

"Now bless thee, sweet bird," sighed the stricken solitary; "thy wings are music, and thou a feathered ray camedst to light my darkened soul."

And from that to his orisons; and then to his tools with a little bit of courage; and this was his day's work: —

Veni Creator Spiritus
Mentes tuorum visita
Imple superna gratia
Quæ tu creasti pectora.

Accende lumen sensibus
Mentes tuorum visita
Infirma nostri corporis
Virtute firmans perpetim.

And so the days rolled on; and the weather got colder and Clement's heart got warmer, and despondency was

rolling away; and by-and-by, somehow or another, it was gone. He had outlived it.

It had come like a cloud, and it went like one.

And presently all was reversed; his cell seemed illuminated with joy. His work pleased him; his prayers were full of unction; his psalms of praise. Hosts of little birds followed their crimson leader, and flying from snow, and a parish full of Cains, made friends one after another with Abel; fast friends. And one keen frosty night as he sang the praises of God to his tuneful psaltery, and his hollow cave rang forth the holy psalmody upon the night, as if that cave itself was Tubal's sounding shell, or David's harp, he heard a clear whine, not unmelodious; it became louder and less in tune. He peeped through the chinks of his rude door, and there sat a great red wolf moaning melodiously with his nose high in the air.

Clement was rejoiced. "My sins are going," he cried, "and the creatures of God are owning me, one after another." And in a burst of enthusiasm he struck up the laud:

"Praise Him all ye creatures of His!

"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

And all the time he sang the wolf bayed at intervals.

But above all he seemed now to be drawing nearer to that celestial intercourse, which was the sign and the bliss of the true hermit; for he had dreams about the saints and angels, so vivid, they were more like visions. He saw bright figures clad in woven snow. They bent on him eyes lovelier than those of the antelope's he had seen at Rome, and fanned him with broad wings hued like the rainbow, and their gentle voices bade him speed upon his course.

He had not long enjoyed this felicity when his dreams

began to take another and a strange complexion. He wandered with Fra Colonna over the relics of antique nations, and the friar was lame and had a staff, and this staff he waved over the mighty ruins, and were they Egyptian, Greek, or Roman, straightway the temples and palaces whose wrecks they were, rose again like an exhalation, and were thronged with the famous dead. Songsters that might have eclipsed both Apollo and his rival, poured forth their lays: women, godlike in form, and draped like Minerva, swam round the marble courts in voluptuous but easy and graceful dances. Here sculptors carved away amidst admiring pupils, and forms of supernatural beauty grew out of Parian marble in a quarter of an hour; and grave philosophers conversed on high and subtle matters, with youth listening reverently: it was a long time ago. And still beneath all this wonderful panorama a sort of suspicion or expectation lurked in the dreamer's mind. "This is a prologue, a flourish, there is something behind; something that means me no good, something mysterious, awful."

And one night that the wizard Colonna had transcended himself, he pointed with his stick, and there was a swallowing up of many great ancient cities, and the pair stood on a vast sandy plain with a huge crimson sun sinking to rest. There were great palm-trees; and there were bulrush hives, scarce a man's height, dotted all about to the sandy horizon, and the crimson sun.

"These are the anchorites of the Theban desert," said Colonna, calmly; "followers not of Christ and his apostles, and the great fathers, but of the Greek pupils of the Egyptian pupils of the Brachmans and Gymnosophists."

And Clement thought that he burned to go and embrace the holy men and tell them his troubles, and seek their advice. But he was tied by the feet somehow, and could

not move, and the crimson sun sank; and it got dusk, and the hives scarce visible. And Colonna's figure became shadowy and shapeless, but his eyes glowed ten times brighter: and this thing all eyes spoke and said: "Nay, let them be, a pack of fools! see how dismal it all is." Then with a sudden sprightliness, "But I hear one of them has a manuscript of Petronius, on papyrus; I go to buy it, farewell forever, forever, forever."

And it was pitch dark, and a light came at Clement's back like a gentle stroke; a glorious roseate light. It warmed as well as brightened. It loosened his feet from the ground; he turned round, and there, her face irradiated with sunshine, and her hair glittering like the gloriola of a saint, was Margaret Brandt.

She blushed and smiled and cast a look of ineffable tenderness on him. "Gerard," she murmured, "be whose thou wilt by day, but at night be mine!"

Even as she spoke, the agitation of seeing her so suddenly awakened him, and he found himself lying trembling from head to foot.

That radiant figure, and mellow voice, seemed to have struck his nightly keynote.

Awake he could pray and praise and worship God; he was master of his thoughts. But, if he closed his eyes in sleep, Margaret, or Satan in her shape, beset him a seeming angel of light. He might dream of a thousand different things, wide as the poles asunder, ere he woke the imperial figure was sure to come and extinguish all the rest in a moment, *stellas exortus uti ætherius sol:* for she came glowing with two beauties never before united, an angel's radiance and a woman's blushes.

Angels cannot blush. So he knew it was a fiend.

He was alarmed, but not so much surprised as at the demon's last artifice. From Anthony to Nicholas of the Rock scarce a hermit that had not been thus beset;

sometimes with gay voluptuous visions, sometimes with lovely phantoms, warm, tangible, and womanly without, demons within, nor always baffled even by the saints. Witness that "angel form with a devil's heart," that came hanging its lovely head, like a bruised flower, to St. Macarius, with a feigned tale: and wept, and wept, and wept, and beguiled him first of his tears and then of half his virtue.

But with the examples of Satanic power and craft had come down copious records of the hermits' triumphs and the weapons by which they had conquered.

Domandum est corpus; the body must be tamed; this had been their watchword for twelve hundred years. It was a tremendous war-cry; for they called the earthly affections, as well as appetites, body; and crushed the whole heart through the suffering and mortified flesh.

Clement then said to himself that the great enemy of man had retired but to spring with more effect, and had allowed him a few days of true purity and joy only to put him off his guard against the soft blandishments he was pouring over the soul, that had survived the buffeting of his black wings. He applied himself to tame the body: he shortened his sleep, lengthened his prayers, and increased his severe temperance to abstinence. Hitherto, following the ordinary rule, he had eaten only at sunset. Now he ate but once in forty-eight hours, drinking a little water every day.

On this the visions became more distinct.

Then he flew to a famous antidote; to "the grand febrifuge" of anchorites — cold water.

He found the deepest part of the stream that ran by his cell; it rose not far off at a holy well; and, clearing the bottom of the large stones, made a hole where he could stand in water to the chin, and, fortified by so

many examples, he sprang from his rude bed upon the next diabolical assault, and entered the icy water.

It made him gasp and almost shriek with the cold. It froze his marrow. "I shall die," he cried, "I shall die: but better this than fire eternal." And the next day he was so stiff in all his joints he could not move, and he seemed one great ache. And even in sleep he felt that his very bones were like so many raging teeth, till the phantom he dreaded came and gave one pitying smile, and all the pain was gone.

Then, feeling that to go into the icy water again, enfeebled by fasts, as he was, might perhaps carry the guilt of suicide, he scourged himself till the blood ran, and so lay down smarting.

And when exhaustion began to blunt the smart down to a throb, that moment the present was away, and the past came smiling back. He sat with Margaret at the duke's feast, the minstrels played divinely, and the purple fountains gushed. Youth and love reigned in each heart, and perfumed the very air.

Then the scene shifted, and they stood at the altar together man and wife. And no interruption this time, and they wandered hand in hand, and told each other their horrible dreams. As for him, "he had dreamed she was dead, and he was a monk; and really the dream had been so vivid, and so full of particulars, that only his eyesight could even now convince him it was only a dream, and they were really one."

And this new keynote once struck, every tune ran upon it. Awake he was Clement the hermit, risen from unearthly visions of the night, as dangerous as they were sweet; asleep he was Gerard Eliassoen, the happy husband of the loveliest and best and truest girl in Holland: all the happier that he had been for some time the sport of hideous dreams, in which he had lost her.

His constant fasts, coupled with other austerities, and the deep mental anxiety of a man fighting with a supernatural foe, had now reduced him nearly to a skeleton; but still on those aching bones hung flesh unsubdued, and quivering with an earthly passion; so, however, he thought: "or why had ill spirits such power over him?" His opinion was confirmed, when one day he detected himself sinking to sleep actually with a feeling of complacency, because now Margaret would come, and he should feel no more pain, and the unreal would be real, and the real unreal, for an hour.

On this he rose hastily with a cry of dismay, and stripping to the skin climbed up to the brambles above his cave, and flung himself on them, and rolled on them writhing with the pain: then he came into his den a mass of gore, and lay moaning for hours; till, out of sheer exhaustion he fell into a deep and dreamless sleep.

He awoke to bodily pain, and mental exultation; he had broken the fatal spell. Yes, it was broken; another and another day passed, and her image molested him no more. But he caught himself sighing at his victory.

The birds got tamer and tamer; they perched upon his hand. Two of them let him gild their little claws. Eating but once in two days, he had more to give them.

His tranquillity was not to last long.

A woman's voice came in from the outside, told him his own story in a very few words, and asked him to tell her where Gerard was to be found.

He was so astounded he could only say, with an instinct of self-defence, "Pray for the soul of Gerard the son of Eli!" meaning that he was dead to the world. And he sat wondering.

When the woman was gone, he determined, after an inward battle, to risk being seen, and he peeped after her to see who it could be; but he took so many precau-

tions, and she ran so quickly back to her friend, that the road was clear.

"Satan!" said he directly.

And that night back came his visions of earthly love and happiness so vividly, he could count every auburn hair in Margaret's head, and see the pupils of her eyes.

Then he began to despair, and said, "I must leave this country; here I am bound fast in memory's chain;" and began to dread his cell. He said, "A breath from hell hath infected it, and robbed even these holy words of their virtue." And unconsciously imitating St. Jerome, a victim of earthly hallucinations, as overpowering and coarser, he took his warmest covering out into the wood hard by, and there flung down under a tree that torn and wrinkled leather bag of bones, which a little ago might have served a sculptor for Apollo.

Whether the fever of his imagination intermitted, as a master mind of our day has shown that all things intermit,[1] or that this really broke some subtle link, I know not, but his sleep was dreamless.

He awoke nearly frozen, but warm with joy within.

"I shall yet be a true hermit, *Dei gratiâ*," said he.

The next day some good soul left on his little platform a new lamb's-wool pelisse and cape, warm, soft, and ample.

He had a moment's misgiving on account of its delicious softness and warmth; but that passed. It was the right skin,[2] and a mark that Heaven approved his present course.

It restored warmth to his bones after he came in from his short rest.

And now, at one moment he saw victory before him if

[1] Dr. Dickson, author of Fallacies of the Faculty, etc.

[2] It is related of a mediæval hermit, that being offered a garment made of cats' skins, he rejected it, saying, "I have heard of a lamb of God, but I never heard of a cat of God."

he could but live to it; at another, he said to himself, "'Tis but another lull; be on thy guard, Clement."

And this thought agitated his nerves, and kept him in continual awe.

He was like a soldier within the enemy's lines.

One night, a beautiful clear frosty night, he came back to his cell, after a short rest. The stars were wonderful. Heaven seemed a thousand times larger as well as brighter than earth, and to look with a thousand eyes instead of one.

"Oh, wonderful," he cried, "that there should be men who do crimes by night; and others scarce less mad, who live for this little world, and not for that great and glorious one, which nightly, to all eyes not blinded by custom, reveals its glowing glories. Thank God I am a hermit."

And in this mood he came to his cell door.

He paused at it; it was closed.

"Why, methought I left it open," said he. "The wind! There is not a breath of wind. What means this?"

He stood with his hand upon the rugged door. He looked through one of the great chinks, for it was much smaller in places than the aperture it pretended to close, and saw his little oil wick burning just where he had left it.

"How is it with me," he sighed, "when I start and tremble at nothing? Either I did shut it, or the fiend hath shut it after me to disturb my happy soul. *Retro Sathanas!*"

And he entered his cave rapidly, and began with somewhat nervous expedition to light one of his largest tapers. While he was lighting it, there was a soft sigh in the cave.

He started and dropped the candle just as it was lighting, and it went out.

He stooped for it hurriedly and lighted it, listening intently. When it was lighted he shaded it with his hand from behind, and threw the faint light all round the cell.

In the farthest corner the outline of the wall seemed broken.

He took a step towards the place with his heart beating.

The candle at the same time getting brighter, he saw it was the figure of a woman.

Another step with his knees knocking together.

It was Margaret Brandt.

CHAPTER XLV.

Her attitude was one to excite pity rather than terror, in eyes not blinded by a preconceived notion. Her bosom was fluttering like a bird, and the red and white coming and going in her cheeks, and she had her hand against the wall by the instinct of timid things, she trembled so; and the marvellous mixed gaze of love, and pious awe, and pity, and tender memories, those purple eyes cast on the emaciated and glaring hermit, was an event in nature.

"Aha!" he cried. "Thou art come at last in flesh and blood; come to me as thou camest to holy Anthony. But I am ware of thee; I thought thy wiles were not exhausted. I am armed." With this he snatched up his small crucifix and held it out at her, astonished, and the candle in the other hand, both crucifix and candle shaking violently, "*Exorcizo te.*"

"Ah, no!" cried she piteously; and put out two pretty deprecating palms. "Alas! work me no ill. It is Margaret."

"Liar!" shouted the hermit. "Margaret was fair, but not so supernatural fair as thou. Thou didst shrink at that sacred name, thou subtle hypocrite. *In Nomine Dei exorcizo vos.*"

"Ah, Jesu!" gasped Margaret, in extremity of terror, "curse me not! I will go home. I thought *I* might come. For very manhood be-Latin me not! O Gerard, is it thus you and I meet after all; after all?"

And she cowered almost to her knees, and sobbed with superstitious fear and wounded affection.

Impregnated as he was with Satanophobia, he might perhaps have doubted still whether this distressed creature, all woman, and nature, was not all art, and fiend. But her spontaneous appeal to that sacred name dissolved his chimera; and let him see with his eyes, and hear with his ears.

He uttered a cry of self-reproach, and tried to raise her; but what with fasts, what with the overpowering emotion of a long solitude so broken, he could not. "What," he gasped, shaking over her, "and is it thou? And have I met thee with hard words? Alas!" And they were both choked with emotion, and could not speak for awhile.

"I heed it not much," said Margaret bravely, struggling with her tears; "you took me for another; for a devil: oh! oh! oh! oh! oh!"

"Forgive me, sweet soul!" And as soon as he could speak more than a word at a time, he said, "I have been much beset by the evil one since I came here."

Margaret looked round with a shudder. "Like enow. Then, oh take my hand, and let me lead thee from this foul place."

He gazed at her with astonishment.

"What, desert my cell, and go into the world again? Is it for that thou hast come to me?" said he, sadly and reproachfully.

"Ay, Gerard. I am come to take thee to thy pretty vicarage: art vicar of Gouda, thanks to Heaven and thy good brother Giles: and mother and I have made it so neat for thee, Gerard. 'Tis well enow in winter, I promise thee. But bide a bit till the hawthorn bloom, and anon thy walls put on their kirtle of brave roses, and sweet woodbine. Have we forgotten thee, and the foolish things thou lovest? And, dear Gerard, thy mother is waiting; and 'tis late for her to be out of her bed;

prithee, prithee, come! And the moment we are out of this foul hole, I'll show thee a treasure thou hast gotten, and knowest nought on't, or sure hadst never fled from us so. Alas! what is to do? What have I ignorantly said; to be regarded thus?"

For he had drawn himself all up into a heap, and was looking at her with a strange gaze of fear and suspicion blended.

"Unhappy girl," said he solemnly, yet deeply agitated, "would you have me risk my soul and yours for a miserable vicarage and the flowers that grow on it? But this is not thy doing: the bowelless fiend sends thee, poor simple girl, to me with this bait. But oh, cunning fiend, I will unmask thee even to this thine instrument, and she shall see thee, and abhor thee as I do. Margaret, my lost love, why am I here? Because I love thee."

"Oh, no, Gerard, you love me not, or you would not have hidden from me; there was no need."

"Let there be no deceit between us twain: that hath loved so true; and after this night, shall meet no more on earth."

"Now God forbid!" said she.

"I love thee, and thou hast not forgotten me, or thou hadst married ere this, and hadst not been the one to find me, buried here from sight of man. I am a priest, a monk: what but folly or sin can come of you and me living neighbors, and feeding a passion innocent once, but now (so Heaven wills it) impious and unholy? No, though my heart break, I must be firm. 'Tis I that am the man, 'tis I that am the priest. You and I must meet no more, till I am schooled by solitude, and thou art wedded to another."

"I consent to my doom but not to thine. I would ten times liever die; yet I will marry, ay, wed misery itself sooner than let thee lie in this foul dismal place, with

yon sweet manse a-waiting for thee." Clement groaned; at each word she spoke out stood clearer and clearer two things — his duty, and the agony it must cost.

"My beloved," said he, with a strange mixture of tenderness and dogged resolution, "I bless thee for giving me one more sight of thy sweet face, and may God forgive thee, and bless thee, for destroying in a minute the holy peace it hath taken six months of solitude to build. No matter. A year of penance will, *Dei gratiâ*, restore me to my calm. My poor Margaret, I seem cruel: yet I am kind. 'Tis best we part; ay, this moment."

"Part, Gerard? Never; we have seen what comes of parting. Part? Why, you have not heard half my story; no, nor the tithe. 'Tis not for thy mere comfort I take thee to Gouda manse. Hear me!"

"I may not. Thy very voice is a temptation with its music, memory's delight."

"But I say you shall hear me, Gerard, for forth this place I go not unheard."

"Then must we part by other means," said Clement, sadly.

"Alack! what other means? Wouldst put me to thine own door, being the stronger?"

"Nay, Margaret, well thou knowest I would suffer many deaths rather than put force on thee; thy sweet body is dearer to me than my own: but a million times dearer to me are our immortal souls, both thine and mine. I have withstood this direst temptation of all long enow. Now I must fly it: farewell! farewell!"

He made to the door, and had actually opened it and got half out, when she darted after and caught him by the arm.

"Nay, then another must speak for me. I thought to reward thee for yielding to me: but unkind that thou art, I need his help I find; turn then this way one moment."

"Nay, nay."

"But I say ay! And then turn thy back on us an thou canst." She somewhat relaxed her grasp, thinking he would never deny her so small a favor. But at this he saw his opportunity and seized it.

"Fly, Clement, fly!" he almost shrieked, and his religious enthusiasm giving him for a moment his old strength, he burst wildly away from her, and after a few steps bounded over the little stream and ran beside it, but finding he was not followed, stopped, and looked back.

She was lying on her face, with her hands spread out.

Yes, without meaning it, he had thrown her down and hurt her.

When he saw that, he groaned and turned back a step; but suddenly, by another impulse, flung himself into the icy water instead.

"There, kill my body!" he cried, "but save my soul!"

Whilst he stood there, up to his throat in liquid ice, so to speak, Margaret uttered one long, piteous moan, and rose to her knees.

He saw her as plain almost as in midday. Saw her pale face and her eyes glistening; and then in the still night he heard these words:

"O, God! thou that knowest all, thou seest how I am used. Forgive me then! For I will not live another day." With this she suddenly started to her feet, and flew like some wild creature, wounded to death, close by his miserable hiding-place, shrieking: "Cruel! — cruel! — cruel! — cruel!"

What manifold anguish may burst from a human heart in a single syllable! There were wounded love, and wounded pride, and despair, and coming madness, all in

that piteous cry. Clement heard, and it froze his heart with terror and remorse, worse than the icy water chilled the marrow of his bones.

He felt he had driven her from him forever, and in the midst of his dismal triumph, the greatest he had won, there came an almost uncontrollable impulse to curse the Church, to curse religion itself, for exacting such savage cruelty from mortal man. At last he crawled half dead out of the water, and staggered to his den. "I am safe here," he groaned; "she will never come near me again; unmanly, ungrateful wretch that I am." And he flung his emaciated, frozen body down on the floor, not without a secret hope that it might never rise thence alive.

But presently he saw by the hour-glass that it was past midnight. On this, he rose slowly and took off his wet things, and, moaning all the time at the pain he had caused her he loved, put on the old hermit's cilice of bristles, and over that his breastplate. He had never worn either of these before, doubting himself worthy to don the arms of that tried soldier. But now he must give himself every aid: the bristles might distract his earthly remorse by bodily pain, and there might be holy virtue in the breastplate.

Then he kneeled down and prayed God humbly to release him that very night from the burden of the flesh. Then he lighted all his candles, and recited his psalter doggedly: each word seemed to come like a lump of lead from a leaden heart, and to fall leaden to the ground; and in this mechanical office every now and then he moaned with all his soul. In the midst of which he suddenly observed a little bundle in the corner he had not seen before in the feebler light, and at one end of it something like gold spun into silk.

He went to see what it could be; and he had no

sooner viewed it closer, than he threw up his hands with rapture. "It is a seraph," he whispered, "a lovely seraph. Heaven hath witnessed my bitter trial, and approves my cruelty; and this flower of the skies is sent to cheer me, fainting under my burden."

He fell on his knees, and gazed with ecstasy on its golden hair, and its tender skin, and cheeks like a peach.

"Let me feast my sad eyes on thee ere thou leavest me for thine ever-blessed abode, and my cell darkens again at thy parting, as it did at hers."

With all this, the hermit disturbed the lovely visitor. He opened wide two eyes, the color of heaven; and seeing a strange figure kneeling over him, he cried, piteously, "Mum—ma! Mum—ma!" And the tears began to run down his little cheeks.

Perhaps, after all, Clement, who for more than six months had not looked on the human face divine, estimated childish beauty more justly than we can; and, in truth, this fair Northern child, with its long golden hair, was far more angelic than any of our imagined angels. But now the spell was broken.

Yet not unhappily. Clement, it may be remembered, was fond of children, and true monastic life fosters this sentiment. The innocent distress on the cherubic face, the tears that ran so smoothly from those transparent violets, his eyes, and his pretty, dismal cry for his only friend, his mother, went through the hermit's heart. He employed all his gentleness and all his art to soothe him; and, as the little soul was wonderfully intelligent for his age, presently succeeded so far that he ceased to cry out, and wonder took the place of fear; while, in silence, broken only in little gulps, he scanned, with great tearful eyes, this strange figure that looked so wild, but spoke so kindly, and wore armor, yet did not

kill little boys, but coaxed them. Clement was equally perplexed to know how this little human flower came to lie sparkling and blooming in his gloomy cave. But he remembered he had left the door wide open, and he was driven to conclude that, owing to this negligence, some unfortunate creature of high or low degree had seized this opportunity to get rid of her child forever.[1] At this his bowels yearned so over the poor deserted cherub, that the tears of pure tenderness stood in his eyes, and still, beneath the crime of the mother, he saw the divine goodness, which had so directed her heartlessness as to comfort his servant's breaking heart.

"Now bless thee, bless thee, bless thee, sweet innocent, I would not change thee for e'en a cherub in heaven."

"At's pooty," replied the infant, ignoring contemptuously, after the manner of infants, all remarks that did not interest him.

"What is pretty here, my love, besides thee?"

"Ookum-gars,"[2] said the boy, pointing to the hermit's breastplate.

"*Quot liberi, tot sententiunculæ!*" Hector's child screamed at his father's glittering casque and nodding crest: and here was a mediæval babe charmed with a polished cuirass, and his griefs assuaged.

"There are prettier things here than that," said Clement, "there are little birds; lovest thou birds?"

"Nay. Ay. En um ittle, ery ittle? Not ike torks. Hate torks; um bigger an baby."

He then confided, in very broken language, that the storks, with their great flapping wings, scared him, and were a great trouble and worry to him, darkening his existence more or less.

[1] More than one hermit had received a present of this kind.
[2] Query? "looking-glass."

"Ay, but my birds are very little, and good, and oh, so pretty!"

"Den I ikes 'm," said the child, authoritatively. "I ont my mammy."

"Alas, sweet dove! I doubt I shall have to fill her place as best I may. Hast thou no daddy as well as mammy, sweet one?"

Now not only was this conversation from first to last, the relative ages, situations, and all circumstances of the parties considered, as strange a one as ever took place between two mortal creatures, but at or within a second or two of the hermit's last question, to turn the strange into the marvellous, came an unseen witness, to whom every word that passed carried ten times the force it did to either of the speakers.

Since, therefore, it is with her eyes you must now see, and hear with her ears, I go back a step for her.

Margaret, when she ran past Gerard, was almost mad. She was in that state of mind in which affectionate mothers have been known to kill their children, sometimes along with themselves, sometimes alone, which last is certainly maniacal. She ran to Reicht Heynes pale and trembling, and clasped her round the neck. "O Reicht! O Reicht!" and could say no more. Reicht kissed her, and began to whimper; and, would you believe it, the great mastiff uttered one long whine; even his glimmer of sense taught him grief was afoot.

"O Reicht!" moaned the despised beauty, as soon as she could utter a word for choking, "see how he has served me;" and she showed her hands, that were bleeding with falling on the stony ground. "He threw me down, he was so eager to fly from me. He took me for a devil; he said I came to tempt him. Am I the woman to tempt a man? you know me, Reicht."

"Nay, in sooth, sweet Mistress Margaret, the last i' the world."

"And he would not look at my child. I'll fling myself and him into the Rotter this night."

"Oh, fie! fie! eh, my sweet woman, speak not so. Is any man that breathes worth your child's life?"

"My child! where is he? Why, Reicht, I have left him behind. Oh, shame! is it possible I can love him to that degree as to forget my child? Ah! I am rightly served for it."

And she sat down, and faithful Reicht beside her, and they sobbed in one another's arms.

After awhile, Margaret left off sobbing, and said, doggedly, "Let us go home."

"Ay, but the bairn?"

"Oh! he is well where he is. My heart is turned against my very child. *He* cares nought for him; wouldn't see him, nor hear speak of him; and I took him there so proud, and made his hair so nice I did, and put his new frock and cowl on him. Nay, turn about; it's his child as well as mine; let him keep it awhile: mayhap that will learn him to think more of its mother and his own."

"High words off an empty stomach," said Reicht.

"Time will show. Come thou home."

They departed, and time did show quicker than he levels abbeys, for at the second step Margaret stopped, and could neither go one way nor the other, but stood stock still.

"Reicht," said she, piteously, "what else have I on earth? I cannot."

"Who ever said you could? Think you I paid attention? Words are woman's breath. Come back for him without more ado; 'tis time we were in our beds, much more he."

Reicht led the way, and Margaret followed readily enough in that direction; but, as they drew near the cell, she stopped again.

"Reicht, go you and ask him, will he give me back my boy; for I could not bear the sight of him."

"Alas! mistress, this do seem a sorry ending after all that hath been betwixt you twain. Bethink thee now, doth thine heart whisper no excuse for him? dost verily hate him for whom thou hast waited so long? Oh, weary world!"

"Hate him, Reicht? I would not harm a hair of his head for all that is in nature; but look on him I cannot; I have taken a horror of him. Oh! when I think of all I have suffered for him, and what I came here this night to do for him, and brought my own darling to kiss him and call him father. Ah, Luke, my poor chap, my wound showeth me thine. I have thought too little of thy pangs, whose true affection I despised: and now my own is despised. Reicht, if the poor lad was here now, he would have a good chance."

"Well, he is not far off," said Reicht Heynes; but, somehow, she did not say it with alacrity.

"Speak not to me of any man," said Margaret, bitterly, "I hate them all."

"For the sake of one."

"Flout me not, but prithee go forward, and get me what *is* my own, my sole joy in the world. Thou knowest I am on thorns till I have him to my bosom again."

Reicht went forward. Margaret sat by the roadside and covered her face with her apron, and rocked herself after the manner of her country, for her soul was full of bitterness and grief. So severe, indeed, was the internal conflict, that she did not hear Reicht running back to her, and started violently when the young woman laid a hand upon her shoulder.

"Mistress Margaret," said Reicht quietly, "take a fool's advice that loves ye. Go softly to yon cave, wi' all the ears and eyes your mother ever gave you."

"Why? — what — Reicht?" stammered Margaret.

"I thought the cave was afire, 'twas so light inside; and there were voices."

"Voices?"

"Ay, not one, but twain, and all unlike, — a man's and a little child's, talking as pleasant as you and me. I am no great hand at a keyhole for my part, 'tis paltry work; but if so be voices were a-talking in yon cave, and them that owned those voices were so near to me as those are to thee, I'd go on all fours like a fox, and I'd crawl on my belly like a serpent, ere I'd lose one word that passes *atwixt those twain.*"

"Whisht, Reicht! Bless thee! Bide thou here. Buss me! Pray for me."

And almost ere the agitated words had left her lips, Margaret was flying towards the hermitage as noiselessly as a lapwing. Arrived near it, she crouched, and there was something truly serpentine in the gliding, flexible, noiseless movements by which she reached the very door; and there she found a chink, and listened. And often it cost her a struggle not to burst in upon them; but, warned by defeat, she was cautious, and resolute to let well alone. And, after awhile, slowly and noiselessly she reared her head, like a snake its crest, to where she saw the broadest chink of all, and looked with all her eyes and soul, as well as listened.

The little boy then being asked whether he had no daddy, at first shook his head, and would say nothing, but, being pressed, he suddenly seemed to remember something, and said he, "Dad—da ill man; run away and leave poor mum—ma."

She who heard this winced. It was as new to her as

to Clement. Some interfering foolish woman had gone and said this to the boy, and now out it came in Gerard's very face. His answer surprised her. He burst out, "The villain! the monster! he must be born without bowels to desert thee, sweet one. Ah! he little knows the joy he hath turned his back on. Well, my little dove, I must be father and mother to thee, since the one runs away, and t'other abandons the to my care. Now to-morrow I shall ask the good people that bring me my food to fetch some nice eggs and milk for thee as well; for bread is good enough for poor old good-for-nothing me, but not for thee. And I shall teach thee to read."

"I can yead, I can yead."

"Ay, verily, so young? all the better. We will read good books together, and I shall show thee the way to heaven. Heaven is a beautiful place, a thousand times fairer and better than earth, and there be little cherubs like thyself, in white, glad to welcome thee and love thee. Wouldst like to go to heaven one day?"

"Ay, along wi' — my — mammy."

"What, not without her then?"

"Nay. I ont my mammy. Where is my mammy?"

(Oh! what it cost poor Margaret not to burst in and clasp him to her heart!)

"Well, fret not, sweetheart, mayhap she will come when thou art asleep. Wilt thou be good now and sleep?"

"I not eepy. Ikes to talk."

"Well, talk we then: tell me thy pretty name."

"Baby." And he opened his eyes with amazement at this great hulking creature's ignorance.

"Hast none other?"

"Nay."

"What shall I do to pleasure thee, baby? Shall I tell thee a story?"

"I ikes tories," said the boy, clapping his hands.

"Or sing thee a song?"

"I ikes tongs;" and he became excited.

"Choose then, a song or a story."

"Ting I a tong. Nay, tell I a tory. Nay, ting I a tong. Nay—" And the corners of his little mouth turned down, and he had half a mind to weep because he could not have both, and could not tell which to forego. Suddenly his little face cleared, "Ting I a tory," said he.

"Sing thee a story, baby? Well, after all, why not? And wilt thou sit o' my knee and hear it?"

"Yea."

"Then I must e'en doff this breastplate: 'tis too hard for thy soft cheek. So. And now I must doff this bristly cilice: they would prick thy tender skin, perhaps make it bleed, as they have me, I see. So. And now I put on my best pelisse, in honor of thy worshipful visit. See how soft and warm it is; bless the good soul that sent it; and now I sit me down; so. And I take thee on my left knee, and put my arm under thy little head; so. And then the psaltery, and play a little tune; so, not too loud."

"I ikes dat.'

"I am right glad on't. Now list the story."

He chanted a child's story in a sort of recitative, singing a little moral refrain now and then. The boy listened with rapture.

"I ikes oo," said he. "Ot is oo? is oo a man?"

"Ay, little heart, and a great sinner to boot."

"I ikes great tingers. Ting one other tory."

Story No. 2 was chanted.

"I ubbs oo," cried the child, impetuously. "Ot caft[1] is oo?"

[1] Craft. He means trade or profession

"I am a hermit, love."

"I ubbs vermins. Ting other one."

But during this final performance, Nature suddenly held out her leaden sceptre over the youthful eyelids. "I is not eepy," whined he very faintly, and succumbed.

Clement laid down the psaltery softly and began to rock his new treasure in his arms, and to croon over him a little lullaby well known in Tergou, with which his own mother had often set him off.

And the child sank into a profound sleep upon his arm. And he stopped crooning and gazed on him with infinite tenderness, yet sadness; for, at that moment, he could not help thinking what might have been but for a piece of paper with a lie in it.

He sighed deeply.

The next moment the moonlight burst into his cell, and with it, and in it, and almost as swift as it, Margaret Brandt was down at his knee with a timorous hand upon his shoulder.

"Gerard, you do not reject us. You cannot."

CHAPTER XLVI.

The startled hermit glared from his nursling to Margaret, and from her to him, in amazement equalled only by his agitation at her so unexpected return. The child lay asleep on his left arm, and she was at his right knee: no longer the pale, scared, panting girl he had overpowered so easily an hour or two ago, but an imperial beauty with blushing cheeks and sparkling eyes, and lips sweetly parted in triumph, and her whole face radiant with a look he could not quite read; for he had never yet seen it on her; maternal pride.

He stared and stared from the child to her, in throbbing amazement.

"Us?" he gasped at last. And still his wonder-stricken eyes turned to and fro.

Margaret was surprised in her turn. It was an age of impressions, not facts. "What!" she cried, "doth not a father know his own child? and a man of God, too? Fie, Gerard, to pretend! nay, thou art too wise, too good, not to have — why, I watched thee; and e'en now look at you twain! 'Tis thine own flesh and blood thou holdest to thine heart."

Clement trembled. "What words are these," he stammered, "this angel mine?"

"Whose else? since he is mine."

Clement turned on the sleeping child with a look beyond the power of the pen to describe, and trembled all over as his eyes seemed to absorb the little love.

Margaret's eyes followed his. "He is not a bit like me," said she proudly; "but oh! at whiles he is thy

very image in little; and see this golden hair. Thine was the very color at his age; ask mother else. And see this mole on his little finger: now look at thine own; there! 'Twas thy mother let me weet thou wast marked so before him; and, O Gerard, 'twas this our child found thee for me; for by that little mark on thy finger I knew thee for his father, when I watched above thy window and saw thee feed the birds." Here she seized the child's hand and kissed it eagerly, and got half of it into her mouth, Heaven knows how. "Ah, bless thee! thou didst find thy poor daddy for her, and now thou hast made us friends again after our little quarrel: the first, the last. Wast very cruel to me but now, my poor Gerard, and I forgive thee, for loving of thy child."

"Ah! ah! ah! ah! ah!" sobbed Clement choking.

And lowered by fasts, and unnerved by solitude, the once strong man was hysterical, and nearly fainting.

Margaret was alarmed, but, having experience, her pity was greater than her fear. "Nay, take not on so," she murmured soothingly, and put a gentle hand upon his brow. "Be brave! So, so. Dear heart, thou art not the first man that hath gone abroad, and come back richer by a lovely little self than he went forth. Being a man of God, take courage, and say He sends thee this to comfort thee for what thou hast lost in me; and that is not so very much, my lamb, for sure the better part of love shall ne'er cool here to thee, though it may in thine, and ought, being a priest, and parson of Gouda."

"I? priest of Gouda? Never!" murmured Clement in a faint voice. "I am a friar of St. Dominic; yet speak on, sweet music, tell me all that has happened thee, before we are parted again."

Now some would on this have exclaimed against parting at all, and raised the true question in dispute. But such women as Margaret do not repeat their mistakes.

It is very hard to defeat them *twice*, where their hearts are set on a thing.

She assented, and turned her back on Gouda manse as a thing not to be recurred to; and she told him her tale, dwelling above all on the kindness to her of his parents; and, while she related her troubles, his hand stole to hers, and often she felt him wince and tremble with ire, and often press her hand, sympathizing with her in every vein.

"Oh, piteous tale of a true heart battling alone against such bitter odds!" said he.

"It all seems small, when I see thee here again, and nursing my boy. We have had a warning, Gerard. True friends like you and me are rare, and they are mad to part ere death divideth them."

"And that is true," said Clement off his guard.

And then she would have him tell her what he had suffered for her, and he begged her to excuse him, and she consented, but by questions quietly revoked her consent and elicited it all; and many a sigh she heaved for him, and more than once she hid her face in her hands with terror at his perils, though past.

And to console him for all he had gone through, she kneeled down and put her arms under the little boy, and lifted him gently up. "Kiss him softly," she whispered. "Again, again; kiss thy fill if thou canst; he is sound. 'Tis all I can do to comfort thee till thou art out of this foul den and in thy sweet manse yonder."

Clement shook his head.

"Well," said she, "let that pass. Know that I have been sore affronted for want of my lines."

"Who hath dared affront thee?"

"No matter; those that will do it again if thou hast lost them, which the saints forbid."

"I lose them? nay, there they lie, close to thy hand."

"Where, where, oh where?"

Clement hung his head. "Look in the Vulgate. Heaven forgive me: I thought thou wert dead, and a saint in heaven."

She looked, and on the blank leaves of the poor soul's Vulgate she found her marriage lines.

"Thank God!" she cried, "thank God! Oh, bless thee, Gerard, bless thee! Why, what is here, Gerard?"

On the other leaves were pinned every scrap of paper she had ever sent him, and their two names she had once written together in sport, and the lock of her hair she had given him, and half a silver coin she had broken with him, and a straw she had sucked her soup with the first day he ever saw her.

When Margaret saw these proofs of love and signs of a gentle heart bereaved, even her exultation at getting back her marriage lines was overpowered by gushing tenderness. She almost staggered, and her hand went to her bosom, and she leaned her brow against the stone cell and wept so silently that he did not see she was weeping; indeed, she would not let him, for she felt that to befriend him now she must be the stronger; and emotion weakens.

"Gerard," said she, "I know you are wise and good. You must have a reason for what you are doing, let it seem ever so unreasonable. Talk we like old friends. Why are you buried alive?"

"Margaret, to escape temptation. My impious ire against those two had its root in the heart; that heart, then, I must deaden; and, *Dei gratiâ*, I shall. Shall I, a servant of Christ and of the Church, court temptation? Shall I pray daily to be led out on't, and walk into it with open eyes?"

"That is good sense any way," said Margaret, with a consummate affectation of candor.

"'Tis unanswerable," said Clement, with a sigh.

"We shall see. Tell me, have you escaped temptation here? Why I ask is, when *I* am alone, my thoughts are far more wild and foolish than in company. Nay, speak sooth; come!"

"I must needs own I have been worse tempted here with evil imaginations than in the world."

"There now."

"Ay, but so were Anthony and Jerome, Macarius and Hilarion, Benedict, Bernard, and all the saints. 'Twill wear off."

"How do you know?"

"I feel sure it will."

"Guessing against knowledge. Here 'tis men-folk are sillier than us that be but women. Wise in their own conceits, they will not let themselves see; their stomachs are too high to be taught by their eyes. A woman, if she went into a hole in a bank to escape temptation, and there found it, would just lift her farthingale and out on't, and not e'en know how wise she was, till she watched a man in like plight."

"Nay, I grant humility and a teachable spirit are the roads to wisdom; but, when all is said, here I wrestle but with imagination. At Gouda she I love as no priest or monk must love any but the angels, she will tempt a weak soul, unwilling, yet not loath, to be tempted."

"Ay, that is another matter; *I* should tempt thee, then? to what, i' God's name?"

"Who knows? The flesh is weak."

"Speak for yourself, my lad. Why, you are thinking of some other Margaret, not Margaret à Peter. Was ever my mind turned to folly and frailty? Stay, is it because you were my husband once, as these lines avouch? Think you the road to folly is beaten for you more than for another? Oh! how shallow are the wise, and how little able are you to read me, who can read you so well from

top to toe. Come, learn thy A B C. Were a stranger to proffer me unchaste love, I should shrink a bit, no doubt, and feel sore, but I should defend myself without making a coil; for men, I know, are so, the best of them sometimes. But if you, that have been my husband, and are my child's father, were to offer to humble me so in mine own eyes, and thine, and his, either I should spit in thy face, Gerard, or, as I am not a downright vulgar woman, I should snatch the first weapon at hand and strike thee dead."

And Margaret's eyes flashed fire, and her nostrils expanded, that it was glorious to see; and no one that did see her could doubt her sincerity.

"I had not the sense to see that," said Gerard, quietly. And he pondered.

Margaret eyed him in silence, and soon recovered her composure.

"Let not you and I dispute," said she, gently; "speak we of other things. Ask me of thy folk."

"My father?"

"Well, and warms to thee and me. Poor soul, a drew glaive on those twain that day, but Jorian Ketel and I we mastered him, and he drove them forth his house forever."

"That may not be; he must take them back."

"That he will never do for us. You know the man; he is dour as iron: yet would he do it for one word from one that will not speak it."

"Who?"

"The Vicar of Gouda. The old man will be at the manse to-morrow, I hear."

"How you come back to that."

"Forgive me: I am but a woman. It is us for nagging; shouldst keep me from it wi' questioning of me."

"My sister Kate?"

"Alas!"

"What, hath ill befallen e'en that sweet lily? Out and alas!"

"Be calm, sweetheart; no harm hath her befallen. Oh, nay, nay, far fro' that." Then Margaret forced herself to be composed, and in a low, sweet, gentle voice she murmured to him thus: "My poor Gerard, Kate hath left her trouble behind her. For the manner on't, 'twas like the rest. Ah! such as she saw never thirty, nor ever shall while earth shall last. She smiled in pain too. A well, then, thus 'twas: she was took wi' a langour and a loss of all her pains."

"A loss of her pains? I understand you not."

"Ay, you are not experienced; indeed, e'en thy mother almost blinded herself, and said, 'tis maybe a change for the better.' But Joan Ketel, which is an understanding woman, she looked at her and said, 'Down sun, down wind!' And the gossips sided and said, 'Be brave, you that are her mother, for she is half way to the saints.' And thy mother wept sore, but Kate would not let her; and one very ancient woman, she said to thy mother, 'She will die as easy as she lived hard.' And she lay painless best part of three days, a-sipping of heaven aforehand. And, my dear, when she was just parting, she asked for 'Gerard's little boy,' and I brought him and set him on the bed, and the little thing behaved as peaceably as he does now. But by this time she was past speaking: but she pointed to a drawer, and her mother knew what to look for: it was two gold angels thou hadst given her years ago. Poor soul! she had kept them till thou shouldst come home. And she nodded towards the little boy, and looked anxious: but we understood her, and put the pieces in his two hands; and, when his little fingers closed on them, she smiled content. And so she gave her little earthly treasures to

her favorite's child — for you *were* her favorite — and her immortal jewel to God, and passed so sweetly we none of us knew justly when she left us. Well-a-day, well-a-day!"

Gerard wept.

"She hath not left her like on earth," he sobbed. "Oh, how the affections of earth curl softly round my heart! I cannot help it: God made them after all. Speak on, sweet Margaret; at thy voice the past rolls its tides back upon me; the loves and the hopes of youth come fair and gliding into my dark cell, and darker bosom, on waves of memory and music."

"Gerard, I am loath to grieve you, but Kate cried a little when she first took ill, at you not being there to close her eyes."

Gerard sighed.

"You were within a league, but hid your face from her."

He groaned.

"There, forgive me for nagging; I am but a woman: you would not have been so cruel to your own flesh and blood knowingly, would you?"

"Oh, no."

"Well then, know that thy brother Sybrandt lies in my charge with a broken back, fruit of thy curse."

"*Mea culpa! mea culpa!*"

"He is very penitent; be yourself and forgive him this night."

"I have forgiven him long ago."

"Think you he can believe that from any mouth but yours? Come! he is but two butts' length hence."

"So near? Why, where?"

"At Gouda manse. I took him there yestreen. For I know you; the curse was scarce cold on your lips when you repented it (Gerard nodded assent), and I said to myself, Gerard will thank me for taking Sybrandt to die

under his roof; he will not beat his breast and cry *mea culpa*, yet grudge three footsteps to quiet a withered brother on his last bed. He may have a bee in his bonnet, but he is not a hypocrite: a thing all pious words and uncharitable deeds."

Gerard literally staggered where he sat at this tremendous thrust.

"Forgive me for nagging," said she. "Thy mother, too, is waiting for thee. Is it well done to keep her on thorns so long? She will not sleep this night. Bethink thee, Gerard, she is all to thee that I am to this sweet child. Ah, I think so much more of mothers since I had my little Gerard! She suffered for thee, and nursed thee, and tended thee from boy to man. Priest, monk, hermit, call thyself what thou wilt, to her thou art but one thing: her child."

"Where is she?" murmured Gerard, in a quavering voice.

"At Gouda manse, wearing the night in prayer and care."

Then Margaret saw the time was come for that appeal to his reason she had purposely reserved till persuasion should have paved the way for conviction. So the smith first softens the iron by fire; and then brings down the sledge hammer.

She showed him, but in her own good straightforward Dutch, that his present life was only a higher kind of selfishness; spiritual egotism. Whereas a priest had no more right to care only for his own soul than only for his own body. That was not *his* path to heaven. "But," said she, "who ever yet lost his soul by saving the souls of others? the Almighty loves him who thinks of others, and when He shall see thee caring for the souls of the folk the duke hath put into thine hand, He will care ten times more for thy soul than He does now."

Gerard was struck by this remark. "Art shrewd in dispute," said he.

"Far from it," was the reply; "only my eyes are not bandaged with conceit.[1] So long as Satan walks the whole earth, tempting men, and so long as the sons of Belial do never lock themselves in caves, but run like ants, to and fro, corrupting others, the good man that skulks apart, plays the devil's game, or at least gives him the odds. Thou a soldier of Christ? ask thy comrade Denys, who is but a soldier of the duke, ask him if ever he skulked in a hole and shunned the battle because forsooth in battle is danger as well as glory and duty. For thy sole excuse is fear; thou makest no secret on't. Go to; no duke nor king hath such cowardly soldiers as Christ hath. What was that you said in the church at Rotterdam about the man in the parable, that buried his talent in the earth and so offended the giver? Thy wonderful gift for preaching, is it not a talent, and a gift from thy Creator?"

"Certes; such as it is."

"And hast thou laid it out, or buried it? To whom hast thou preached these seven months? to bats and owls? Hast buried it in one hole with thyself and thy once good wits?

"The Dominicans are the friars preachers. 'Tis for preaching they were founded; so thou art false to Dominic as well as to his Master.

"Do you remember, Gerard, when we were young together, which now are old before our time, as we walked handed in the fields, did you but see a sheep cast, ay, three fields off, you would leave your sweetheart (by her good will), and run and lift the sheep for charity? Well then, at Gouda is not one sheep in evil plight, but a whole flock; some cast, some strayed, some

[1] I think she means prejudice.

sick, some tainted, some a being devoured, and all for the want of a shepherd. Where is their shepherd? lurking in a den like a wolf; a den in his own parish. Out, fie! out, fie!

"I scented thee out, in part, by thy kindness to the little birds. Take note, you Gerard Eliassoen must love something; 'tis in your blood; you were born to't. Shunning man, you do but seek earthly affection a peg lower than man."

Gerard interrupted her. "The birds are God's creatures, His innocent creatures, and I do well to love them, being God's creatures."

"What, are they creatures of the same God that we are, that he is who lies upon thy knee?"

"You know they are."

"Then what pretence for shunning us and being kind to them? Sith man is one of the animals, why pick him out to shun? Is't because he is of animals the paragon? What, you court the young of birds, and abandon your own young? Birds need but bodily food, and, having wings, deserve scant pity if they cannot fly and find it. But that sweet dove upon thy knee, he needeth not carnal only, but spiritual food. He is thine as well as mine: and I have done my share. He will soon be too much for me, and I look to Gouda's parson to teach him true piety and useful lore. Is he not of more value than many sparrows?"

Gerard started and stammered an affirmation. For she waited for his reply.

"You wonder," continued she, "to hear me quote Holy Writ so glib. I have pored over it this four years, and why? Not because God wrote it, but because I saw it often in thy hands ere thou didst leave me. Heaven forgive me; I am but a woman. What thinkest thou of this sentence? 'Let your light so shine before men

that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven!' What is a saint in a sink better than 'a light under a bushel'?

"Therefore, since the sheep committed to thy charge bleat for thee and cry: 'Oh, desert us no longer, but come to Gouda manse;' since I, who know thee ten times better than thou knowest thyself, do pledge my soul it is for thy soul's weal to go to Gouda manse, — since duty to thy child, too long abandoned, calls thee to Gouda manse, — since thy sovereign, whom Holy Writ again bids thee honor, sends thee to Gouda manse, — since the Pope, whom the Church teaches thee to revere, hath absolved thee of thy monkish vows, and orders thee to Gouda manse" —

"Ah?"

"Since thy gray-haired mother watches for thee in dole and care, and turneth oft the hour-glass and sigheth sore that thou comest so slow to her at Gouda manse, — since thy brother, withered by thy curse, awaits thy forgiveness and thy prayers for his soul, now lingering in his body, at Gouda manse, — take thou up in thine arms the sweet bird wi' crest of gold that nestles to thy bosom, and give me thy hand; thy sweetheart erst and wife, and now thy friend, the truest friend to thee this night that ere man had; and come with me to Gouda manse!"

"It is the voice of an angel!" cried Clement loudly.

"Then hearken it, and come forth to Gouda manse!"

The battle was won.

Margaret lingered behind, cast her eye rapidly round the furniture, and selected the Vulgate and the psaltery. The rest she sighed at and let it lie. The breastplate and the cilice of bristles she took and dashed with feeble ferocity on the floor. Then, seeing Gerard watch her with surprise from the outside, she colored and said: "I am but a woman: 'little' will still be 'spiteful.'"

"Why encumber thyself with those? They are safe."

"Oh, she had a reason."

And with this they took the road to Gouda parsonage. The moon and stars were so bright, it seemed almost as light as day.

Suddenly Gerard stopped. "My poor little birds!"

"What of them?"

"They will miss their food. I feed them every day."

"The child hath a piece of bread in his cowl. Take that and feed them now, against the morn."

"I will. Nay, I will not. He is as innocent, and nearer to me and to thee."

Margaret drew a long breath. "Tis well. Hadst taken it, I might have hated thee; I am but a woman."

When they had gone about a quarter of a mile, Gerard sighed. "Margaret," said he, "I must e'en rest; he is too heavy for me."

"Then give him me, and take thou these. Alas, alas! I mind when thou wouldst have run with the child on one shoulder, and the mother on t'other."

And Margaret carried the boy.

"I trow," said Gerard, looking down, "overmuch fasting is not good for a man."

"A many die of it each year, winter time," replied Margaret.

Gerard pondered these simple words, and eyed her askant, carrying the child with perfect ease. When they had gone nearly a mile, he said, with considerable surprise: "You thought it was but two butts' length."

"Not I."

"Why, you said so."

"That is another matter." She then turned on him the face of a Madonna. "I lied," said she sweetly. "And to save your soul and body, I'd maybe tell a worse lie than that, at need. I am but a woman. Ah, well, it is but two butts' length from here at any rate."

"Without a lie?"

"Humph! Three, without a lie."

And sure enough, in a few minutes they came up to the manse.

A candle was burning in the vicar's parlor. "She is waking still," whispered Margaret.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" said Clement, and stopped to look at it.

"What, in Heaven's name?"

"That little candle, seen through the window at night. Look an it be not like some fair star of size prodigious: it delighteth the eyes and warmeth the heart of those outside."

"Come, and I'll show thee something better," said Margaret, and led him on tiptoe to the window.

They looked in, and there was Catherine kneeling on the hassock, with her "hours" before her.

"Folk can pray out of a cave," whispered Margaret. "Ay, and hit heaven with their prayers. For 'tis for a sight of thee she prayeth; and thou art here. Now, Gerard, be prepared: she is not the woman you knew her; her children's troubles have greatly broken the brisk, light-hearted soul. And I see she has been weeping e'en now; she will have given thee up, being so late."

"Let me get to her," said Clement, hastily, trembling all over.

"That door! I will bide here."

When Gerard was gone to the door, Margaret, fearing the sudden surprise, gave one sharp tap at the window and cried: "Mother!" in a loud, expressive voice that Catherine read at once. She clasped her hands together and had half risen from her kneeling posture, when the door burst open and Clement flung himself wildly on his knees at her knees, with his arms out to embrace her. She uttered a cry such as only a mother could. "Ah!

my darling, my darling!" And clung sobbing round his neck. And true it was, she saw neither a hermit, a priest, nor a monk, but just her child, lost, and despaired of, and in her arms. And after a little while Margaret came in, with wet eyes and cheeks, and a holy calm of affection settled by degrees on these sore troubled ones. And they sat all three together, hand in hand, murmuring sweet and loving converse; and he who sat in the middle drank right and left their true affection and their humble but genuine wisdom, and was forced to eat a good nourishing meal, and at daybreak was packed off to a snowy bed, and by-and-by awoke, as from a hideous dream, friar and hermit no more, Clement no more, but Gerard Eliassoen, parson of Gouda.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Margaret went back to Rotterdam long ere Gerard awoke, and actually left her boy behind her. She sent the faithful, sturdy Reicht off to Gouda directly with a vicar's gray frock and large felt hat, and with minute instructions how to govern her new master.

Then she went to Jorian Ketel; for she said to herself, "he is the closest I ever met, so he is the man for me," and in concert with him she did two mortal sly things; yet not, in my opinion, virulent, though she thought they were; but if I am asked what were these deeds without a name, the answer is, that as she, "who was 'but a woman,' kept them secret till her dying day, I, who am a man, — *verbum non amplius addam.*"

She kept away from Gouda parsonage.

Things that pass little noticed in the heat of argument, sometimes rankle afterwards; and, when she came to go over all that had passed, she was offended at Gerard's thinking she could ever forget the priest in the sometime lover. "For what did he take me?" said she. And this raised a great shyness which really she would not otherwise have felt, being downright innocent. And pride sided with modesty, and whispered "Go no more to Gouda parsonage."

She left little Gerard there to complete the conquest her maternal heart ascribed to him, not to her own eloquence and sagacity; and to anchor his father forever to humanity.

But this generous stroke of policy cost her heart dear. She had never yet been parted from her boy an hour;

and she felt sadly strange as well as desolate without him. After the first day it became intolerable; and what does the poor soul do, but creep at dark up to Gouda parsonage, and lurk about the premises like a thief till she saw Reicht Heynes in the kitchen alone. Then she tapped softly at the window and said, "Reicht, for pity's sake bring him out to me unbeknown." With Margaret the person who occupied her thoughts at the time ceased to have a name, and sank to a pronoun.

Reicht soon found an excuse for taking little Gerard out, and there was a scene of mutual rapture; followed by mutual tears when mother and boy parted again.

And it was arranged that Reicht should take him half way to Rotterdam every day, at a set hour, and Margaret meet them. And at these meetings, after the raptures, and after mother and child had gambolled together like a young cat and her first kitten, the boy would sometimes amuse himself alone at their feet, and the two women generally seized this opportunity to talk very seriously about Luke Peterson. This began thus:

"Reicht," said Margaret, "I as good as promised him to marry Luke Peterson. 'Say you the word,' quoth I, 'and I'll wed him.'"

"Poor Luke!"

"Prithee, why poor Luke?"

"To be bandied about so, atwixt yea and nay."

"Why, Reicht, you have not ever been so simple as to cast an eye of affection on the boy, that you take his part?"

"Me?" said Reicht, with a toss of the head.

"Oh, I ask your pardon. Well, then, you can do me a good turn."

"Whisht! whisper! that little darling is listening to every word, and eyes like saucers."

On this both their heads would have gone under one cap.

Two women plotting against one boy? Oh, you great cowardly serpents!

But when these stolen meetings had gone on about five days, Margaret began to feel the injustice of it, and to be irritated as well as unhappy.

And she was crying about it, when a cart came to her door, and in it, clean as a new penny, his beard close shaved, his bands white as snow, and a little color in his pale face, sat the vicar of Gouda in the gray frock and large felt hat she had sent him.

She ran up-stairs directly and washed away all trace of her tears and put on a cap, which, being just taken out of the drawer, was cleaner, theoretically, than the one she had on; and came down to him.

He seized both her hands and kissed them, and a tear fell upon them. She turned her head away at that to hide her own which started.

"My sweet Margaret," he cried, "why is this? Why hold you aloof from your own good deed? we have been waiting and waiting for you every day, and no Margaret."

"You said things."

"What! when I was a hermit: and a donkey."

"Ay! no matter, you said things. And you had no reason."

"Forget all I said there. Who hearkens the ravings of a maniac? for I see now that in a few months more I should have been a gibbering idiot: yet no mortal could have persuaded me away but you. Oh, what an outlay of wit and goodness was yours! But it is not here I can thank and bless you as I ought; no, it is in the home you have given me, among the sheep whose shepherd you have made me; already I love them dearly; there it is I must thank 'the truest friend ever man had.' So now I say to you as erst you said to me, come to Gouda manse."

"Humph! we will see about that."

"Why, Margaret, think you I had ever kept the dear child so long but that I made sure you would be back to him from day to day? Oh, he curls round my very heart-strings, but what is my title to him compared to thine? Confess now, thou hast hard thoughts of me for this."

"Nay, nay, not I. Ah! thou art thyself again; wast ever thoughtful of others. I have half a mind to go to Gouda manse, for your saying that."

"Come then, with half thy mind, 'tis worth the whole of other folk's."

"Well, I dare say I will; but there is no such mighty hurry," said she, coolly (she was literally burning to go). "Tell me first how you agree with your folk."

"Why, already my poor have taken root in my heart."

"I thought as much."

"And there are such good creatures among them; simple and rough and superstitious, but wonderfully good."

"Oh! leave you alone for seeing a grain of good among a bushel of ill."

"Whisht, whisht! And, Margaret, two of them have been ill friends for four years, and came to the manse each to get on my blind side. But, give the glory to God, I got on their bright side, and made them friends and laugh at themselves for their folly."

"But are you in very deed their vicar? answer me that."

"Certes; have I not been to the bishop and taken the oath, and rung the church bell, and touched the altar, the missal, and the holy cup, before the churchwardens? And they have handed me the parish seal; see, here it is. Nay 'tis a real vicar inviting a true friend to Gouda manse."

"Then my mind is at ease. Tell me oceans more."

"Well, sweet one, nearest to me of all my parish is a poor cripple that my guardian angel and his (her name thou knowest even by this turning of thy head away) hath placed beneath my roof. Sybrandt and I are that we never were till now, brothers. 'Twould gladden thee, yet sadden thee, to hear how we kissed and forgave one another. He is full of thy praises, and wholly in a pious mind; he says he is happier since his trouble than e'er he was in the days of his strength. Oh! out of my house he ne'er shall go to any place but heaven."

"Tell me somewhat that happened thyself, poor soul! All this is good, but yet no tidings to me. Do I not know thee of old?"

"Well, let me see. At first I was much dazzled by the sunlight, and could not go abroad (owl!); but that is passed; and good Reicht Heynes — humph!"

"What of her?"

"This to thine ear only, for she is a diamond. Her voice goes through me like a knife, and all voices seem loud but thine, which is so mellow, sweet. Stay, now I'll fit ye with tidings: I spake yesterday with an old man that conceits he is ill-tempered, and sweats to pass for such with others, but oh! so threadbare, and the best good heart beneath."

"Why, 'tis a parish of angels," said Margaret, ironically.

"Then why dost thou keep out on't?" retorted Gerard. "Well, he was telling me there was no parish in Holland where the devil hath such power as at Gouda; and among his instances, says he, 'We had a hermit, the holiest in Holland; but, being Gouda, the devil came for him this week, and took him, bag and baggage: not a ha'porth of him left but a goodish piece of his skin, just for all the world like a hedgehog's, and a piece o' old iron furbished up.'"

Margaret smiled.

"Ay, but," continued Gerard, "the strange thing is, the cave has verily fallen in; and, had I been so perverse as resist thee, it had assuredly buried me dead there where I had buried myself alive. Therefore in this I see the finger of Providence, condemning my late, approving my present, way of life. What sayest thou?"

"Nay, can I pierce the like mysteries? I am but a woman."

"Somewhat more, methinks. This very tale proves thee my guardian angel, and all else avouches it: so come to Gouda manse."

"Well, go you on, I'll follow."

"Nay, in the cart with me."

"Not so."

"Why?"

"Can I tell why and wherefore, being a woman? All I know is I seem — to feel — to wish — to come alone."

"So be it then. I leave thee the cart, being, as thou sayest, a woman, and I'll go afoot being a man again, with the joyful tidings of thy coming."

When Margaret reached the manse the first thing she saw was the two Gerards together, the son performing his *capriccios* on the plot, and the father slouching on a chair, in his great hat, with pencil and paper, trying very patiently to sketch him.

After a warm welcome he showed her his attempts. "But in vain I strive to fix him," said he, "for he is incarnate quicksilver. Yet do but note his changes, infinite, but none ungracious, all is supple and easy; and how he melteth from one posture to another." He added presently, "Woe to illuminators! looking on thee, sir baby, I see what awkward, lopsided, ungainly toads I and my fellows painted missals with, and called them cherubs and seraphs." Finally he threw the paper away

in despair, and Margaret conveyed it secretly into her bosom.

At night when they sat round the peat fire he bade them observe how beautiful the brass candlesticks and other glittering metals were in the glow from the hearth. Catherine's eyes sparkled at this observation. "And oh, the sheets I lie in here," said he; "often my conscience pricketh me and saith, 'Who art thou to lie in lint like web of snow?' Dives was ne'er so flaxed as I. And to think that there are folk in the world that have all the beautiful things which I have here, yet not content. Let them pass six months in a hermit's cell, seeing no face of man; then will they find how lovely and pleasant this wicked world is; and eke that men and women are God's fairest creatures. Margaret was always fair, but never to my eye so bright as now." Margaret shook her head incredulously. Gerard continued, "My mother was ever good and kind, but I noted not her exceeding comeliness till now."

"Nor I neither," said Catherine; "a score years ago I might pass in a crowd, but not now."

Gerard declared to her that each age had its beauty. "See this mild gray eye," said he, "that hath looked motherly love upon so many of us, all that love hath left its shadow, and that shadow is a beauty which defieth Time. See this delicate lip, these pure white teeth. See this well-shaped brow, where comeliness just passeth into reverence. Art beautiful in my eyes, mother dear."

"And that is enough for me, my darling. 'Tis time you were in bed, child. Ye have to preach the morn."

And Reicht Heynes and Catherine interchanged a look which said, "We two have an amiable maniac to superintend; calls everything beautiful."

The next day was Sunday, and they heard him preach in his own church. It was crammed with persons, who

came curious, but remained devout. Never was his wonderful gift displayed more powerfully; he was himself deeply moved by the first sight of all his people, and his bowels yearned over this flock he had so long neglected. In a single sermon, which lasted two hours, and seemed to last but twenty minutes, he declared the whole Scripture; he terrified the impenitent and thoughtless, confirmed the wavering, consoled the bereaved and the afflicted, uplifted the hearts of the poor, and, when he ended, left the multitude standing, rapt, and unwilling to believe the divine music of his voice and soul had ceased.

Need I say that two poor women in a corner sat entranced, with streaming eyes?

"Wherever gat he it all?" whispered Catherine, with her apron to her eyes. "By our Lady, not from me."

As soon as they were by themselves Margaret threw her arms round Catherine's neck and kissed her.

"Mother, mother, I am not quite a happy woman, but oh, I am a proud one."

And she vowed on her knees never by word or deed to let her love come between this young saint and heaven.

Reader, did you ever stand by the seashore after a storm, when the wind happens to have gone down suddenly? The waves cannot cease with their cause; indeed, they seem at first to the ear to lash the sounding shore more fiercely than while the wind blew. Still we are conscious that inevitable calm has begun, and is now but rocking them to sleep. So it was with those true and tempest-tossed lovers from that eventful night, when they went hand in hand beneath the stars from Gouda hermitage to Gouda manse.

At times a loud wave would every now and then come roaring; but it was only memory's echo of the tempest that had swept their lives, the storm itself was over; and

the boiling waters began from that moment to go down, down, down, gently, but inevitably.

This image is to supply the place of interminable details, that would be tedious and tame. What best merits attention at present, is the general situation, and the strange complication of feeling that arose from it. History itself, though a far more daring story-teller than romance, presents few things so strange [1] as the footing on which Gerard and Margaret now lived for many years. United by present affection, past familiarity, and a marriage irregular, but legal; separated by holy Church and by their own consciences, which sided unreservedly with holy Church; separated by the Church, but united by a living pledge of affection, lawful in every sense at its date.

And living but a few miles from one another, and she calling his mother "mother." For some years she always took her boy to Gouda on Sunday, returning home at dark. Go when she would, it was always fête at Gouda manse, and she was received like a little queen. Catherine, in these days, was nearly always with her, and Eli very often. Tergou had so little to tempt them, compared with Rotterdam; and at last they left it altogether, and set up in the capital.

And thus the years glided; so barren now of striking incidents, so void of great hopes, and free from great fears, and so like one another, that without the help of dates I could scarcely indicate the progress of time.

However, early next year, 1471, the Duchess of Bur-

[1] Let me not be understood to apply this to the bare outline of the relation. Many bishops and priests, and not a few popes, had wives and children as laymen; and entering orders were parted from the wives and not from the children. But in the case before the reader are the additional features of a strong surviving attachment on both sides, and of neighborhood, besides that here the man had been led into holy orders by a false statement of the woman's death. On a summary of all the essential features, the situation was, to the best of my belief, unique.

gundy with the open dissent, but secret connivance of the duke, raised forces to enable her dethroned brother, Edward the Fourth of England, to invade that kingdom; our old friend Denys thus enlisted, and passing through Rotterdam to the ships, heard on his way that Gerard was a priest, and Margaret alone. On this he told Margaret that marriage was not a habit of his, but that as his comrade had put it out of his own power to keep troth, he felt bound to offer to keep it for him; "for a comrade's honor is dear to us as our own," said he.

She stared, then smiled; "I choose rather to be still thy she-comrade," said she; "closer acquainted we might not agree so well." And in her character of she-comrade she equipped him with a new sword of Antwerp make, and a double handful of silver. "I give thee no gold," said she, "for 'tis thrown away as quick as silver, and harder to win back. Heaven send thee safe out of all thy perils; there be famous fair women yonder to beguile thee with their faces, as well as men to hash thee with their axes."

He was hurried on board at La Vere, and never saw Gerard at that time.

In 1473, Sybrandt began to fail. His pitiable existence had been sweetened by his brother's inventive tenderness, and his own contented spirit, which, his antecedents considered, was truly remarkable. As for Gerard, the day never passed that he did not devote two hours to him; reading or singing to him, praying with him, and drawing him about in a soft carriage Margaret and he had made between them. When the poor soul found his end near, he begged Margaret might be sent for; she came at once, and almost with his last breath he sought once more that forgiveness she had long ago accorded. She remained by him till the last; and he died blessing and blessed, in the arms of the two true lovers he had parted for life. *Tantum religio scit suadere boni.*

1474 there was a wedding in Margaret's house. Luke Peterson and Reicht Heynes.

This may seem less strange if I give the purport of the dialogue interrupted some time back.

Margaret went on to say, "Then in that case you can easily make him fancy you, and for my sake you must, for my conscience it pricketh me, and I must needs fit him with a wife, the best I know." Margaret then instructed Reicht to be always kind and good-humored to Luke; and she would be a model of peevishness to him. "But be not thou so simple as run me down," said she. "Leave that to me. Make thou excuses for me; I will make myself black enow."

Reicht received these instructions like an order to sweep a room, and obeyed them punctually.

When they had subjected poor Luke to this double artillery for a couple of years, he got to look upon Margaret as his fog and wind, and Reicht as his sunshine; and his affections transferred themselves, he scarce knew how or when.

On the wedding-day Reicht embraced Margaret and thanked her almost with tears. "He was always my fancy," said she, "from the first hour I clapped eyes on him."

"Heyday, you never told me that. What, Reicht, are you as sly as the rest?"

"Nay, nay," said Reicht, eagerly; "but I never thought you would really part with him to me. In my country the mistress looks to be served before the maid."

Margaret settled them in her shop, and gave them half the profits.

1476 and 7 were years of great trouble to Gerard, whose conscience compelled him to oppose the Pope. His Holiness, siding with the Gray Friars in their determination to swamp every palpable distinction be-

tween the Virgin Mary and her Son, bribed the Christian world into his crotchet by proffering pardon of all sins to such as would add to the Ave Mary, this clause: "and blessed be thy Mother Anna, from whom, without blot of original sin, proceeded thy virgin flesh."

Gerard, in common with many of the Northern clergy, held this sentence to be flat heresy; he not only refused to utter it in his church, but warned his parishioners against using it in private; and he refused to celebrate the new feast the Pope invented at the same time, viz., "the feast of the miraculous conception of the Virgin."

But this drew upon him the bitter enmity of the Franciscans, and they were strong enough to put him into more than one serious difficulty, and inflict many a little mortification on him.

In emergencies he consulted Margaret, and she always did one of two things, either she said, "I do not see my way:" and she refused to guess; or else she gave him advice that proved wonderfully sagacious. He had genius; but she had marvellous tact.

And where affection came in and annihilated the woman's judgment, he stepped in his turn to her aid. Thus, though she knew she was spoiling little Gerard, and Catherine was ruining him for life, she would not part with him, but kept him at home, and his abilities uncultivated. And there was a shrewd boy of nine years, instead of learning to work and obey, playing about and learning selfishness from their infinite unselfishness, and tyrannizing with a rod of iron over two women, both of them sagacious and spirited, but reduced by their fondness for him to the exact level of idiots.

Gerard saw this with pain, and interfered with mild but firm remonstrance; and after a considerable struggle prevailed, and got little Gerard sent to the best school in Europe, kept by one Haaghe at Deventer; this was

in 1477. Many tears were shed, but the great progress the boy made at that famous school reconciled Margaret in some degree, and the fidelity of Reicht Heynes, now her partner in business, enabled her to spend weeks at a time hovering over her boy at Deventer.

And so the years glided; and these two persons, subjected to as strong and constant a temptation as can well be conceived, were each other's guardian angels; and not each other's tempters.

To be sure, the well-greased morality of the next century, which taught that solemn vows to God are sacred in proportion as they are reasonable, had at that time entered no single mind; and the alternative to these two minds was self-denial, or sacrilege.

It was a strange thing to hear them talk with unrestrained tenderness to one another of their boy; and an icy barrier between themselves all the time.

Eight years had now passed thus, and Gerard, fairly compared with men in general, was happy.

But Margaret was not.

The habitual expression of her face was a sweet pensiveness; but sometimes she was irritable and a little petulant. She even snapped Gerard now and then. And, when she went to see him, if a monk was with him, she would turn her back and go home.

She hated the monks for having parted Gerard and her, and she inoculated her boy with a contempt for them which lasted him till his dying day.

Gerard bore with her like an angel. He knew her heart of gold, and hoped this ill gust would blow over.

He himself being now the right man in the right place this many years, loving his parishioners, and beloved by them, and occupied from morn till night in good works, recovered the natural cheerfulness of his disposition. To tell the truth, a part of his jocoseness was a blind; he

was the greatest peacemaker, except Mr. Harmony in the play, that ever was born. He reconciled more enemies in ten years than his predecessors had done in three hundred; and one of his manœuvres in the peace-making art was to make the quarrellers laugh at the cause of quarrel. So did he undermine the demon of discord. But, independently of that, he really loved a harmless joke. He was a wonderful tamer of animals, squirrels, hares, fawns, etc. So, half in jest, a parishioner who had a mule supposed to be possessed with a devil, gave it him, and said, "Tame this vagabone, parson, if ye can." Well, in about six months, Heaven knows how, he not only tamed Jack, but won his affections to such a degree, that Jack would come running to his whistle like a dog. One day, having taken shelter from a shower on the stone settle outside a certain public house, he heard a toper inside, a stranger, boasting he could take more at a draught than any man in Gouda. He instantly marched in, and said, "What, lads, do none of ye take him up for the honor of Gouda? Shall it be said that there came hither one from another parish a greater sot than any of us? Nay, then, I your parson do take him up. Go to; I'll find thee a parishioner shall drink more at a draught than thou."

A bet was made; Gerard whistled; in clattered Jack — for he was taught to come into a room with the utmost composure — and put his nose into his backer's hand.

"A pair of buckets!" shouted Gerard, "and let us see which of these two sons of asses can drink most at a draught."

On another occasion two farmers had a dispute whose hay was the best. Failing to convince each other, they said, "We'll ask parson;" for by this time he was their referee in every mortal thing.

"How lucky you thought of me!" said Gerard. "Why, I have got one staying with me who is the best judge of hay in Holland. Bring me a double handful apiece."

So when they came he had them into the parlor, and put each bundle on a chair. Then he whistled, and in walked Jack.

"Lord a mercy!" said one of the farmers.

"Jack," said the parson in the tone of conversation, "just tell us which is the best hay of these two."

Jack sniffed them both, and made his choice directly; proving his sincerity by eating every morsel. The farmers slapped their thighs, and scratched their heads. "To think of we not thinking o' that." And they each sent Jack a truss.

So Gerard got to be called the merry parson of Gouda. But Margaret, who like most loving women had no more sense of humor than a turtle-dove, took this very ill. "What!" said she to herself, "is there nothing sore at the bottom of his heart that he can go about playing the zany?" She could understand pious resignation and content, but not mirth, in true lovers parted. And whilst her woman's nature was perturbed by this gust (and women seem more subject to gusts than men) came that terrible animal, a busybody, to work upon her. Catherine saw she was not happy, and said to her, "Your boy is gone from you. I would not live alone all my days if I were you."

"*He* is more alone than I," sighed Margaret.

"Oh, a man is a man; but a woman is a woman. You must not think all of him and none of yourself. Near is your kirtle, but nearer is your smock. Besides, he is a priest, and can do no better. But you are not a priest. He has got his parish, and his heart is in that. Bethink thee! Time flies; overstay not thy market. Wouldst

not like to have three or four more little darlings about thy knee now they have robbed thee of poor little Gerard, and sent him to yon nasty school?" And so she worked upon a mind already irritated.

Margaret had many suitors ready to marry her at a word or even a look, and among them two merchants of the better class, Van Schelt and Oostwagen. "Take one of these two," said Catherine.

"Well, I will ask Gerard if I may," said Margaret one day with a flood of tears; "for I cannot go on the way I am."

"Why, you would never be so simple as ask *him?*"

"Think you I would be so wicked as marry without his leave?"

Accordingly she actually went to Gouda, and after hanging her head, and blushing, and crying, and saying she was miserable, told him his mother wished her to marry one of those two; and if he approved of her marrying at all, would he use his wisdom, and tell her which he thought would be the kindest to the little Gerard of those two; for herself she did not care what became of her.

Gerard felt as if she had put a soft hand into his body, and torn his heart out with it. But the priest with a mighty effort mastered the man. In a voice scarcely audible he declined this responsibility. "I am not a saint or a prophet," said he; "I might advise thee ill. I shall read the marriage service for thee," faltered he; "it is my right. No other would pray for thee as I should. But thou must choose for thyself; and oh! let me see thee happy. This four months past thou hast not been happy."

"A discontented mind is never happy," said Margaret.

She left him, and he fell on his knees, and prayed for help from above.

Margaret went home pale and agitated. "Mother," said she, "never mention it to me again or we shall quarrel."

"He forbade you? Well, more shame for him, that is all."

"He forbid me? He did not condescend so far. He was as noble as I was paltry. He would not choose for me for fear of choosing me an ill husband. But he would read the service for my groom and me; that was his right. O mother, what a heartless creature I was!"

"Well, I thought not he had that much sense."

"Ah, you go by the poor soul's words; but I rate words as air when the face speaketh to mine eye. I saw the priest and the true lover a-fighting in his dear face, and his cheek pale with the strife, and oh! his poor lip trembled as he said the stout-hearted words — Oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh! oh!" And Margaret burst into a violent passion of tears.

Catherine groaned. "There, give it up without more ado," said she. "You two are chained together for life; and, if God is merciful, that won't be for long; for what are you? neither maid, wife, nor widow."

"Give it up?" said Margaret: "that was done long ago. All I think of now is comforting him; for now I have been and made him unhappy too, wretch and monster that I am."

So the next day they both went to Gouda. And Gerard, who had been praying for resignation all this time, received her with peculiar tenderness as a treasure he was to lose; but she was agitated and eager to let him see without words that she would never marry, and she fawned on him like a little dog to be forgiven. And as she was going away she murmured, "Forgive! and forget! I am but a woman."

He misunderstood her, and said, "All I bargain for is,

let me see thee content; for pity's sake, let me not see thee unhappy as I have this while."

"My darling, you never shall again," said Margaret, with streaming eyes, and kissed his hand.

He misunderstood this too at first; but when month after month passed, and he heard no more of her marriage, and she came to Gouda comparatively cheerful, and was even civil to Father Ambrose, a mild benevolent monk from the Dominican convent hard by — then he understood her; and one day he invited her to walk alone with him in the sacred paddock; and before I relate what passed between them, I must give its history.

When Gerard had been four or five days at the manse, looking out of the window he uttered an exclamation of joy. "Mother, Margaret, here is one of my birds; another, another; four, six, nine. A miracle! a miracle!"

"Why, how can you tell your birds from their fellows?" said Catherine.

"I know every feather in their wings. And see; there is the little darling whose claw I gilt, bless it!"

And presently his rapture took a serious turn, and he saw Heaven's approbation in this conduct of the birds as he did in the fall of the cave. This wonderfully kept alive his friendship for animals: and he enclosed a paddock, and drove all the sons of Cain from it with threats of excommunication. "On this little spot of earth we'll have no murder," said he. He tamed leverets and partridges, and little birds, and hares, and roe-deer. He found a squirrel with a broken leg; he set it with infinite difficulty and patience; and during the cure showed it repositories of acorns, nuts, chestnuts, etc. And this squirrel got well and went off, but visited him in hard weather, and brought a mate, and next year little squirrels were found to have imbibed their parents' sentiments: and of all these animals each generation was

tamer than the last. This set the good parson thinking, and gave him the true clew to the great successes of mediæval hermits in taming wild animals.

He kept the key of this paddock, and never let any man but himself enter it: nor would he even let little Gerard go there without him or Margaret. "Children are all little Cains," said he.

In this oasis then he spoke to Margaret, and said, "Dear Margaret, I have thought more than ever of thee of late, and have asked myself why I am content, and thou unhappy."

"Because thou art better, wiser, holier than I; that is all," said Margaret, promptly.

"Our lives tell another tale," said Gerard, thoughtfully. "I know thy goodness and thy wisdom too well to reason thus perversely. Also I know that I love thee as dear as thou, I think, lovest me. Yet am I happier than thou. Why is this so?"

"Dear Gerard, I am as happy as a woman can hope to be this side the grave."

"Not so happy as I. Now for the reason. First then I am a priest, and this, the one great trial and disappointment God giveth me along with so many joys, why, I share it with a multitude. For, alas! I am not the only priest by thousands that must never hope for entire earthly happiness. Here then thy lot is harder than mine."

"But, Gerard, I have my child to love. Thou canst not fill thy heart with him as his mother can. So you may set this against you."

"And I have ta'en him from thee; it was cruel; but he would have broken thy heart one day if I had not. Well then, sweet one, I come to where the shoe pincheth, methinks. I have my parish, and it keeps my heart in a glow from morn till night. There is scarce an emotion

that my folk stir not up in me many times a day. Often their sorrows make me weep, sometimes their perversity kindles a little wrath, and their absurdity makes me laugh, and sometimes their flashes of unexpected goodness do set me all of a glow: and I could hug 'em. Meantime thou, poor soul, sittest with heart" —

"Of lead, Gerard, of very lead."

"See now, how unkind thy lot compared with mine. Now how if thou couldst be persuaded to warm thyself at the fire that warmeth me?"

"Ah, if I could?"

"Hast but to will it. Come among my folk. Take in thine hand the alms I set aside, and give it with kind words; hear their sorrows: they shall show you life is full of troubles, and, as thou sayest truly, no man or woman without their thorn this side the grave. In-doors I have a map of Gouda parish. Not to o'erburden thee at first, I will put twenty housen under thee with their folk. What sayest thou? but for thy wisdom I had died a dirty maniac, and ne'er seen Gouda manse, nor pious peace. Wilt profit in turn by what little wisdom *I* have to soften her lot to whom I do owe all?"

Margaret assented warmly; and a happy thing it was for the little district assigned to her; it was as if an angel had descended on them. Her fingers were never tired of knitting or cutting for them, her heart of sympathizing with them. And that heart expanded and waved its drooping wings; and the glow of good and gentle deeds began to spread over it: and she was rewarded in another way, by being brought into more contact with Gerard, and also with his spirit. All this time malicious tongues had not been idle. "If there is nought between them more than meets the eye, why doth she not marry?" etc. And I am sorry to say our old friend Joan Ketel was one of these coarse sceptics. And now,

one winter evening she got on a hot scent. She saw Margaret and Gerard talking earnestly together on the Boulevard. She whipped behind a tree. "Now I'll hear something," said she: and so she did. It was winter; there had been one of those tremendous floods, followed by a sharp frost, and Gerard in despair as to where he should lodge forty or fifty houseless folk out of the piercing cold. And now it was, "O dear, dear Margaret, what shall I do? The manse is full of them, and a sharp frost coming on this night."

Margaret reflected, and Joan listened.

"You must lodge them in the church," said Margaret, quietly.

"In the church? Profanation."

"No: charity profanes nothing; not even a church: soils nought, not even a church. To-day is but Tuesday. Go save their lives; for a bitter night is coming. Take thy stove into the church: and there house them. We will dispose of them here and there ere the Lord's day."

"And I could not think of that: bless thee, sweet Margaret; thy mind is stronger than mine, and readier."

"Nay, nay, a woman looks but a little way; therefore she sees clear. I'll come over myself to-morrow."

And on this they parted with mutual blessings.

Joan glided home remorseful.

And after that she used to check all surmises to their discredit. "Beware," she would say, "lest some angel should blister thy tongue. Gerard and Margaret paramours? I tell ye they are two saints which meet in secret to plot charity to the poor."

In the summer of 1481 Gerard determined to provide against similar disasters recurring to his poor. Accordingly he made a great hole in his income, and bled his friends (zealous parsons always do that) to build a large Xenodochium to receive the victims of flood or fire.

Giles and all his friends were kind, but all was not enough; when lo! the Dominican monks of Gouda, to whom his parlor and heart had been open for years, came out nobly and put down a handsome sum to aid the charitable vicar.

"The dear good souls," said Margaret, "who would have thought it!"

"Any one who knows them," said Gerard. "Who more charitable than monks?"

"Go to! They do but give the laity back a pig of their own sow."

"And what more do I? What more doth the duke?"

Then the ambitious vicar must build almshouses for decayed true men in their old age, close to the manse, that he might keep and feed them, as well as lodge them. And, his money being gone, he asked Margaret for a few thousand bricks, and just took off his coat and turned builder; and as he had a good head, and the strength of a Hercules, with the zeal of an artist, up rose a couple of almshouses parson built.

And at this work Margaret would sometimes bring him his dinner, and add a good bottle of Rhenish. And once, seeing him run up a plank with a wheelbarrow full of bricks, which really most bricklayers would have gone staggering under, she said, "Times are changed since I had to carry little Gerard for thee."

"Ay, dear one, thanks to thee."

When the first home was finished, the question was who they should put into it; and being fastidious over it like a new toy, there was much hesitation. But an old friend arrived in time to settle this question.

As Gerard was passing a public house in Rotterdam one day, he heard a well-known voice. He looked up, and there was Denys of Burgundy; but sadly changed: his beard stained with gray, and his clothes worn and

ragged; he had a cuirass still, and gauntlets, but a staff instead of an arbalest. To the company he appeared to be bragging and boasting; but in reality he was giving a true relation of Edward the Fourth's invasion of an armed kingdom with two thousand men, and his march through the country with armies capable of swallowing him, looking on, his battles at Tewkesbury and Barnet, and re-occupation of his capital and kingdom in three months after landing at the Humber with a mixed handful of Dutch, English, and Burgundians.

In this, the greatest feat of arms the century had seen, Denys had shone; and whilst sneering at the warlike pretensions of Charles the Bold, a duke with an itch, but no talent, for fighting, and proclaiming the English king the first captain of the age, did not forget to exalt himself.

Gerard listened with eyes glittering affection and fun. "And now," said Denys, "after all these feats, patted on the back by the gallant young Prince of Gloucester, and smiled on by the great captain himself, here I am lamed for life; by what? by the kick of a horse, and this night I know not where I shall lay my tired bones. I had a comrade once in these parts, that would not have let me lie far from him. But he turned priest and deserted his sweetheart; so 'tis not likely he would remember his comrade. And ten years play sad havoc with our hearts, and limbs, and all." Poor Denys sighed, and Gerard's bowels yearned over him.

"What words are these?" he said, with a great gulp in his throat. "Who grudges a brave soldier supper and bed? Come home with me!"

"Much obliged; but I am no lover of priests."

"Nor I of soldiers; but what is supper and bed between two true men?"

"Not much to you; but something to me. I will come."

"In one hour," said Gerard, and went in high spirits to Margaret, and told her the treat in store, and she must come and share it. She must drive his mother in his little carriage up to the manse with all speed, and make ready an excellent supper.

Then he himself borrowed a cart, and drove Denys up rather slowly, to give the women time.

On the road Denys found out this priest was a kind soul; so told him his trouble, and confessed his heart was pretty near broken. "The great use our stout hearts, and arms, and lives, till we are worn out, and then fling us away like broken tools." He sighed deeply; and it cost Gerard a great struggle not to hug him then and there, and tell him. But he wanted to do it all like a story-book. Who has not had this fancy once in his life? Why, Joseph had it; all the better for us.

They landed at the little house. It was as clean as a penny; the hearth blazing, and supper set.

Denys brightened up. "Is this your house, reverend sir?"

"Well, 'tis my work, and with these hands; but 'tis your house."

"Ah, no such luck," said Denys, with a sigh.

"But I say ay," shouted Gerard. "And what is more, I"— (gulp) "say" — (gulp) "*Courage, camarade, le diable est mort!*"

Denys started, and almost staggered. "Why, what?" he stammered, "w—wh—who art thou, that bringest me back the merry words and merry days of my youth?" and he was greatly agitated.

"My poor Denys, I am one whose face is changed, but nought else: to my heart, dear, trusty comrade, to my heart." And he opened his arms, with the tears in his eyes. But Denys came close to him, and peered in his face, and devoured every feature; and when he was sure

it was really Gerard, he uttered a cry so vehement it brought the women running from the house, and fell upon Gerard's neck, and kissed him again and again, and sank on his knees, and laughed and sobbed with joy so terribly that Gerard mourned his folly in doing dramas. But the women with their gentle soothing ways soon composed the brave fellow; and he sat smiling, and holding Margaret's hand and Gerard's. And they all supped together, and went to their beds with hearts warm as a toast; and the broken soldier was at peace, and in his own house, and under his comrade's wing.

His natural gayety returned, and he resumed his *consigne* after eight years' disuse, and hobbled about the place, enlivening it; but offended the parish mortally, by calling the adored vicar comrade, and nothing but comrade.

When they made a fuss about this to Gerard, he just looked in their faces, and said, "What does it matter? Break him of swearing, and you shall have my thanks."

This year Margaret went to a lawyer to make her will, for without this, she was told, her boy might have trouble some day to get his own, not being born in lawful wedlock. The lawyer, however, in conversation, expressed a different opinion.

"This is the babble of churchmen," said he. "Yours is a perfect marriage, though an irregular one."

He then informed her that throughout Europe, excepting only the southern part of Britain, there were three irregular marriages, the highest of which was hers, viz., a betrothal before witnesses.

"This," said he, "if not followed by matrimonial intercourse, is a marriage complete in form, but incomplete in substance. A person so betrothed can forbid any other banns to all eternity. It has, however, been set aside, where a party so betrothed contrived to get married reg-

ularly, and children were born thereafter. But such a decision was for the sake of the offspring, and of doubtful justice. However, in your case, the birth of your child closes that door, and your marriage is complete both in form and substance. Your course, therefore, is to sue for your conjugal rights: it will be the prettiest case of the century. The law is all on our side, the Church all on theirs. If you come to that, the old Batavian law, which *compelled* the clergy to marry, hath fallen into disuse, but was never formally repealed."

Margaret was quite puzzled. "What are you driving at, sir? Who am I to go to law with?"

"Who is the defendant? Why, the vicar of Gouda."

"Alas, poor soul! And for what shall I law him?"

"Why, to make him take you into his house, and share bed and board with you, to be sure."

Margaret turned red as fire. "Gramercy for your rede," said she. "What, is yon a woman's part? Constrain a man to be hers by force? That is men's way of wooing, not ours. Say I were so ill a woman as ye think me, I should set myself to beguile him, not to law him;" and she departed, crimson with shame and indignation.

"There is an impracticable fool for you," said the man of art.

Margaret had her will drawn elsewhere, and made her boy safe from poverty, marriage or no marriage.

These are the principal incidents that in ten whole years befell two peaceful lives, which in a much shorter period had been so thronged with adventures and emotions.

Their general tenor was now peace, piety, the mild content that lasts, not the fierce bliss ever on tiptoe to depart, and, above all, Christian charity.

On this sacred ground these two true lovers met with an uniformity and a kindness of sentiment which went

far to soothe the wound in their own hearts. To pity the same bereaved; to hunt in couples all the ills in Gouda, and contrive and scheme together to remedy all that were remediable; to use the rare insight into troubled hearts which their own troubles had given them, and use it to make others happier than themselves, this was their daily practice. And in this blessed cause their passion for one another cooled a little, but their affection increased. From the time Margaret entered heart and soul into Gerard's pious charities, that affection purged itself of all mortal dross. And as it had now long outlived scandal and misapprehension, one would have thought that so bright an example of pure self-denying affection was to remain long before the world, to show men how nearly religious faith, even when not quite reasonable, and religious charity, which is always reasonable, could raise two true lovers' hearts to the loving hearts of the angels of heaven. But the great Disposer of events ordered otherwise.

Little Gerard rejoiced both his parents' hearts by the extraordinary progress he made at Alexander Haaghe's famous school at Deventer.

The last time Margaret returned from visiting him, she came to Gerard flushed with pride. "O Gerard, he will be a great man one day, thanks to thy wisdom in taking him from us silly women. A great scholar, one Zinthius, came to see the school and judge the scholars, and didn't our Gerard stand up, and not a line in Horace or Terence could Zinthius cite, but the boy would follow him with the rest. 'Why, 'tis a prodigy,' says that great scholar; and there was his poor mother stood by and heard it. And he took our Gerard in his arms, and kissed him; and what think you he said?"

"Nay, I know not."

"'Holland will hear of thee one day: and not Holland only, but all the world.' Why, what a sad brow!"

"Sweet one, I am as glad as thou; yet am I uneasy to hear the child is wise before his time. I love him dear: but he is thine idol; and Heaven doth often break our idols."

"Make thy mind easy," said Margaret. "Heaven will never rob me of my child. What I was to suffer in this world I have suffered. For if any ill happened my child or thee, I should not live a week. The Lord He knows this, and He will leave me my boy."

A month had elapsed after this; but Margaret's words were yet ringing in his ears, when, going his daily round of visits to his poor, he was told quite incidentally and as mere gossip that the plague was at Deventer, carried thither by two sailors from Hamburgh.

His heart turned cold within him. News did not gallop in those days. The fatal disease must have been there a long time before the tidings would reach Gouda. He sent a line by a messenger to Margaret, telling her that he was gone to fetch little Gerard to stay at the manse a little while; and would she see a bed prepared, for he should be back next day. And so he hoped she would not hear a word of the danger till it was all happily over. He borrowed a good horse, and scarce drew rein till he reached Deventer, quite late in the afternoon. He went at once to the school. The boy had been taken away.

As he left the school he caught sight of Margaret's face at the window of a neighboring house she always lodged at when she came to Deventer.

He ran hastily in to scold her and pack both her and the boy out of the place.

To his surprise the servant told him with some hesitation that Margaret had been there, but was gone.

"Gone, woman?" said Gerard, indignantly. "Art not ashamed to say so? Why, I saw her but now at the window."

"Oh, if you saw her" —

A sweet voice above said, "Stay him not, let him enter." It was Margaret.

Gerard ran up the stairs to her, and went to take her hand.

She drew back hastily.

He looked astounded.

"I am displeased," said she, coldly. "What makes you here? Know you not the plague is in the town?"

"Ay, dear Margaret: and came straightway to take our boy away."

"What, had he no mother?"

"How you speak to me! I hoped you knew not."

"What, think you I leave my boy unwatched? I pay a trusty woman that notes every change in his cheek when I am not here, and lets me know. I am his mother."

"Where is he?"

"In Rotterdam, I hope, ere this."

"Thank Heaven! And why are you not there?"

"I am not fit for the journey: never heed me; go you home on the instant: I'll follow. For shame of you to come here risking your precious life."

"It is not so precious as thine," said Gerard. "But let that pass; we will go home together, and on the instant."

"Nay, I have some matters to do in the town. Go thou at once; and I will follow forthwith."

"Leave thee alone in a plague-stricken town? To whom speak you, dear Margaret?"

"Nay, then we shall quarrel, Gerard."

"Methinks I see Margaret and Gerard quarrelling! Why, it takes two to quarrel, and we are but one."

With this Gerard smiled on her sweetly. But there was no kind responsive glance. She looked cold, gloomy, and troubled. He sighed, and sat patiently down opposite her with his face all puzzled and saddened. He said nothing: for he felt sure she would explain her capricious conduct, or it would explain itself.

Presently she rose hastily, and tried to reach her bedroom: but on the way she staggered and put out her hand. He ran to her with a cry of alarm. She swooned in his arms. He laid her gently on the ground, and beat her cold hands, and ran to her bedroom, and fetched water, and sprinkled her pale face. His own was scarce less pale; for in a basin he had seen water stained with blood: it alarmed him, he knew not why. She was a long time ere she revived, and when she did she found Gerard holding her hand, and bending over her with a look of infinite concern and tenderness. She seemed at first as if she responded to it, but the next moment her eyes dilated, and she cried, "Ah, wretch, leave my hand; how dare you touch me?"

"Heaven help her!" said Gerard. "She is not herself."

"You will not leave me, then, Gerard?" said she, faintly. "Alas! why do I ask? Would I leave thee if thou wert — At least touch me not, and then I will let thee bide, and see the last of poor Margaret. She ne'er spoke harsh to thee before, sweetheart; and she never will again."

"Alas! what mean these dark words, these wild and troubled looks?" said Gerard, clasping his hands.

"My poor Gerard," said Margaret, "forgive me that I spoke so to thee. I am but a woman, and would have spared thee a sight will make thee weep." She burst into tears. "Ah, me!" she cried, weeping, "that I cannot keep grief from thee: there is a great sorrow

before my darling, and this time I shall not be able to come and dry his eyes."

"Let it come, Margaret, so it touch not thee," said Gerard, trembling.

"Dearest," said Margaret, solemnly, "call now religion to thine aid and mine. I must have died before thee one day, or else outlived thee and so died of grief."

"Died? thou die? I will never let thee die. Where is thy pain? What is thy trouble?"

"The plague," said she calmly. Gerard uttered a cry of horror, and started to his feet: she read his thought. "Useless," said she, quietly. "My nose hath bled; none ever yet survived to whom that came along with the plague. Bring no fools hither to babble over the body they cannot save. I am but a woman; I love not to be stared at; let none see me die but thee."

And even with this a convulsion seized her, and she remained sensible but speechless a long time.

And now for the first time Gerard began to realize the frightful truth, and he ran wildly to and fro, and cried to Heaven for help as drowning men cry to their fellow-creatures. She raised herself on her arm, and set herself to quiet him.

She told him she had known the torture of hopes and fears, and was resolved to spare him that agony. "I let my mind dwell too much on the danger," said she, "and so opened my brain to it; through which door when this subtle venom enters it makes short work. I shall not be spotted or loathsome, my poor darling; God is good and spares thee that; but in twelve hours I shall be a dead woman. Ah, look not so, but be a man: be a priest! Waste not one precious minute over my body; it is doomed; but comfort my parting soul."

Gerard sick and cold at heart kneeled down, and prayed for help from Heaven to do his duty.

When he rose from his knees his face was pale and old, but deadly calm and patient. He went softly and brought her bed into the room, and laid her gently down and supported her head with pillows. Then he prayed by her side the prayers for the dying, and she said Amen to each prayer. Then for some hours she wandered, but when the fell disease had quite made sure of its prey, her mind cleared; and she begged Gerard to shrive her; "For oh, my conscience it is laden," said she, sadly.

"Confess thy sins to me, my daughter; let there be no reserve."

"My father," said she sadly, "I have one great sin on my breast this many years. E'en now that death is at my heart, I can scarce own it. But the Lord is *débonair:* if thou wilt pray to Him, perchance He may forgive me."

"Confess it first, my daughter."

"I — alas!"

"Confess it!"

"I deceived thee. This many years I have deceived thee."

Here tears interrupted her speech.

"Courage, my daughter, courage," said Gerard, kindly, overpowering the lover in the priest.

She hid her face in her hands, and with many sighs told him it was she who had broken down the hermit's cave with the help of Jorian Ketel. "I, shallow, did it but to hinder thy return thither; but when thou sawest therein the finger of God, I played the traitress, and said, 'While he thinks so he will ne'er leave Gouda manse;' and I held my tongue. O false heart!"

"Courage, my daughter; thou dost exaggerate a trivial fault."

"Ah, but 'tis not all. The birds."

"Well?"

"They followed thee not to Gouda by miracle but by

my treason. I said, he will ne'er be quite happy without his birds that visited him in his cell; and I was jealous of them, and cried, and said, these foul little things, they are my child's rivals. And I bought loaves of bread, and Jorian and me we put crumbs at the cave door, and thence went sprinkling them all the way to the manse, and there a heap. And my wiles succeeded, and they came, and thou wast glad, and I was pleased to see thee glad; and when thou sawest in my guile the finger of Heaven, wicked, deceitful, I did hold my tongue. But *die* deceiving thee? ah, no. I could not. Forgive me if thou canst; I was but a woman; I knew no better at the time. 'Twas writ in my bosom with a very sunbeam, 'Tis good for him to bide at Gouda manse.'"

"Forgive thee, sweet innocent?" sobbed Gerard, "what have *I* to forgive? Thou hadst a foolish froward child to guide to his own weal, and didst all this for the best. I thank thee and bless thee. But as thy confessor, all deceit is ill in Heaven's pure eye. Therefore thou hast done well to confess and report it; and even on thy confession and penitence the Church through me absolves thee. Pass to thy graver faults."

"My graver faults? Alas! alas! Why, what have I done to compare? I am not an ill woman, not a very ill one. If He can forgive me deceiving thee, He can well forgive me all the rest ever I did."

Being gently pressed, she said she was to blame not to have done more good in the world. "I had just begun to do a little," she said; "and now I must go. But I repine not, since 'tis Heaven's will. Only I am so afeard thou wilt miss me." And at this she could not restrain her tears, though she tried hard.

Gerard struggled with his as well as he could; and, knowing her life of piety, purity, and charity, and see-

ing that she could not, in her present state, realize any sin but her having deceived *him*, gave her full absolution. Then he put the crucifix in her hand, and, while he consecrated the oil, bade her fix her mind neither on her merits nor her demerits, but on Him who died for her on the tree.

She obeyed him, with a look of confiding love and submission.

And he touched her eyes with the consecrated oil, and prayed aloud beside her.

Soon after she dozed.

He watched beside her, more dead than alive himself.

When the day broke she awoke, and seemed to acquire some energy. She begged him to look in her box for her marriage lines, and for a picture, and bring them both to her. He did so. She then entreated him by all they had suffered for each other, to ease her mind by making a solemn vow to execute her dying requests.

He vowed to obey them to the letter.

"Then, Gerard, let no creature come here to lay me out. I could not bear to be stared at; my very corpse would blush. Also, I would not be made a monster of for the worms to sneer at as well as feed on. Also, my very clothes are tainted, and shall to earth with me. I am a physician's daughter: and ill becomes me kill folk, being dead, which did so little good to men in the days of health; wherefore lap me in lead the way I am, and bury me deep! yet not so deep but what one day thou mayst find the way, and lay thy bones by mine.

"Whiles I lived I went to Gouda but once or twice a week. It cost me not to go each day. Let me gain this by dying, to be always at dear Gouda — in the green kirkyard.

"Also, they do say the spirit hovers where the body lies: I would have my spirit hover near thee, and the

kirkyard is not far from the manse. I am so afeard some ill will happen thee, Margaret being gone.

"And see, with mine own hands I place my marriage lines in my bosom. Let no living hand move them, on pain of thy curse and mine. Then, when the angel comes for me at the last day, he shall say, this is an honest woman; she hath her marriage lines (for you know I am your lawful wife, though holy Church hath come between us), and he will set me where the honest women be. I will not sit among ill women, no, not in heaven; for their mind is not my mind, nor their soul my soul. I have stood, unbeknown, at my window, and heard their talk."

For some time she was unable to say any more, but made signs to him that she had not done.

At last she recovered her breath, and bade him look at the picture.

It was the portrait he had made of her when they were young together, and little thought to part so soon. He held it in his hands and looked at it, but could scarce see it. He had left it in fragments, but now it was whole.

"They cut it to pieces, Gerard. But see, Love mocked at their knives.

"I implore thee with my dying breath, let this picture hang ever in thine eye.

"I have heard that such as die of the plague, unspotted, yet after death spots have been known to come out; and, oh, I could not bear thy last memory of me to be so! Therefore, as soon as the breath is out of my body, cover my face with this handkerchief, and look at me no more till we meet again; 'twill not be so very long. Oh, promise!"

"I promise," said Gerard, sobbing.

"But look on this picture instead. Forgive me; I am but a woman. I could not bear my face to lie a foul thing in thy memory. Nay, I must have thee still think

me as fair as I was true. Hast called me an angel once or twice; but be just! did I not still tell thee I was no angel, but only a poor simple woman, that whiles saw clearer than thou because she looked but a little way, and that loves thee dearly, and never loved but thee, and now with her dying breath prays thee indulge her in this, thou that art a man."

"I will, I will. Each word, each wish is sacred."

"Bless thee! bless thee! So then the eyes that now can scarce see thee, they are so troubled by the pest, and the lips that shall not touch thee to taint thee, will still be before thee, as they were when we were young, and thou didst love me."

"When I did love thee, Margaret! Oh, never loved I thee as now."

"Hast not told me so of late."

"Alas! hath love no voice but words? I was a priest; I had charge of thy soul; the sweet offices of a pure love were lawful; words of love imprudent at the least. But now the good fight is won, ah me! Oh, my love, if thou hast lived doubting of thy Gerard's heart, die not so: for never was woman loved so tenderly as thou this ten years past."

"Calm thyself, dear one," said the dying woman, with a heavenly smile. "I know it: only, being but a woman, I could not die happy till I had heard thee say so. Ah, I have pined ten years for those sweet words. Hast said them; and this is the happiest hour of my life. I had to die to get them; well, I grudge not the price."

From this moment a gentle complacency rested on her fading features, but she did not speak.

Then Gerard, who had loved her soul so many years, feared lest she should expire with a mind too fixed on earthly affection. "O my daughter," he cried, "my dear daughter, if indeed thou lovest me as I love thee,

give me not the pain of seeing thee die with thy pious soul fixed on mortal things.

"Dearest lamb of all my fold, for whose soul I must answer, oh, think not now of mortal love, but of His who died for thee on the tree. Oh, let thy last look be heavenwards, thy last word a word of prayer."

She turned a look of gratitude and obedience on him. "What saint?" she murmured: meaning, doubtless, "what saint should she invoke as an intercessor."

"He to whom the saints themselves do pray."

She turned on him one more sweet look of love and submission, and put her pretty hands together in prayer like a child.

"*Jesu!*"

This blessed word was her last. She lay with her eyes heavenwards, and her hands put together.

Gerard prayed fervently for her passing spirit. And when he had prayed a long time with his head averted, not to see her last breath, all seemed unnaturally still. He turned his head fearfully. It was so.

She was gone.

Nothing left him now but the earthly shell of as constant, pure, and loving a spirit as ever adorned the earth.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

A PRIEST is never more thoroughly a priest than in the chamber of death. Gerard did the last offices of the Church for the departed, just as he should have done them for his smallest parishioner. He did this mechanically, then sat down stupefied by the sudden and tremendous blow; and not yet realizing the pangs of bereavement. Then in a transport of religious enthusiasm he kneeled and thanked Heaven for her Christian end.

And then all his thought was to take her away from strangers, and lay her in his own churchyard. That very evening a covered cart with one horse started for Gouda, and in it was a coffin, and a broken-hearted man lying with his arms and chin resting on it.

The mourner's short-lived energy had exhausted itself in the necessary preparations, and now he lay crushed, clinging to the cold lead that held her.

The man of whom the cart was hired walked by the horse's head, and did not speak to him, and when he baited the horse, spoke but in a whisper respecting that mute agony. But, when he stopped for the night, he and the landlord made a well-meaning attempt to get the mourner away to take some rest and food. But Gerard repulsed them, and, when they persisted, almost snarled at them, like a faithful dog, and clung to the cold lead all night. So then they drew a cloak over him, and left him in peace.

And at noon the sorrowful cart came up to the manse, and there were full a score of parishioners collected with

one little paltry trouble or another. They had missed the parson already. And when they saw what it was, and saw their healer so stricken down, they raised a loud wail of grief, and it roused him from his lethargy of woe, and he saw where he was, and their faces, and tried to speak to them. "O my children! my children!" he cried; but choked with anguish could say no more.

Yet the next day, spite of all remonstrances, he buried her himself, and read the service with a voice that only trembled now and then. Many tears fell upon her grave. And when the service ended, he stayed there standing like a statue, and the people left the churchyard out of respect.

He stood like one in a dream, till the sexton, who was, as most men are, a fool, began to fill in the grave without giving him due warning.

But at the sound of earth falling on her, Gerard uttered a piercing scream.

The sexton forbore.

Gerard staggered and put his hand to his breast. The sexton supported him, and called for help.

Jorian Ketel, who lingered near, mourning his benefactress, ran into the churchyard, and the two supported Gerard into the manse.

"Ah, Jorian! good Jorian!" said he, "something snapped within me; I felt it, and I heard it: here, Jorian, here:" and he put his hand to his breast.

CHAPTER XLIX.

A FORTNIGHT after this a pale, bowed figure entered the Dominican convent in the suburbs of Gouda, and sought speech with Brother Ambrose, who governed the convent as deputy, the prior having lately died, and his successor, though appointed, not having arrived.

The sick man was Gerard, come to end life as he began it. He entered as a novice, on probation; but the truth was, he was a failing man, and knew it, and came there to die in peace, near kind and gentle Ambrose, his friend, and the other monks, to whom his house and heart had always been open.

His manse was more than he could bear; it was too full of reminiscences of her.

Ambrose, who knew his value and his sorrow, was not without a kindly hope of curing him, and restoring him to his parish. With this view he put him in a comfortable cell over the gateway, and forbade him to fast or practise any austerities.

But in a few days the new prior arrived, and proved a very Tartar. At first he was absorbed in curing abuses, and tightening the general discipline; but one day hearing the vicar of Gouda had entered the convent as a novice, he said, "'Tis well; let him first give up his vicarage, then, or go: I'll no fat parsons in my house." The prior then sent for Gerard, and he went to him; and the moment they saw one another they both started.

"Clement!"

"Jerome!"

CHAPTER L.

Jerome was as morose as ever in his general character, but he had somewhat softened towards Gerard. All the time he was in England he had missed him more than he thought possible, and since then had often wondered what had become of him. What he heard in Gouda raised his feeble brother in his good opinion; above all, that he had withstood the Pope and the Minorites on "the infernal heresy of the immaculate conception," as he called it. But when one of his young monks told him with tears in his eyes the cause of Gerard's illness, all his contempt revived. "Dying for a woman?"

He determined to avert this scandal: he visited Clement twice a day in his cell, and tried all his old influence and all his eloquence to induce him to shake off this unspiritual despondency, and not rob the Church of his piety and his eloquence at so critical a period.

Gerard heard him, approved his reasoning, admired his strength, confessed his own weakness, and continued visibly to wear away to the land of the leal. One day Jerome told him he had heard his story, and heard it with pride. "But now," said he, "you spoil it all, Clement; for this is the triumph of earthly passion. Better have yielded to it, and repented, than resist it while she lived, and succumb under it now, body and soul."

"Dear Jerome," said Clement, so sweetly as to rob his remonstrance of the tone of remonstrance, "here, I think, you do me some injustice. Passion there is none,

but a deep affection, for which I will not blush here, since I shall not blush for it in heaven. Bethink thee, Jerome; the poor dog that dies of grief on his master's grave, is he guilty of passion? Neither am I. Passion had saved my life, and lost my soul. She was my good angel: she sustained me in my duty and charity: her face encouraged me in the pulpit: her lips soothed me under ingratitude. She intertwined herself with all that was good in my life; and after leaning on her so long, I could not go on alone. And, dear Jerome, believe me, I am no rebel against heaven. It is God's will to release me. When they threw the earth upon her poor coffin, something snapped within my bosom here that mended may not be. I heard it and I felt it. And from that time, Jerome, no food that I put in my mouth had any savor. With my eyes bandaged now I could not tell thee which was bread, and which was flesh, by eating of it."

"Holy saints!"

"And again, from that same hour my deep dejection left me, and I smiled again. I often smile — why? I read it thus: He in whose hands are the issues of life and death gave me that minute the great summons; 'twas some cord of life snapped in me. He is very pitiful. I should have lived unhappy; but He said, 'No; enough is done, enough is suffered; poor, feeble, loving servant, thy shortcomings are forgiven, thy sorrows touch thine end; come thou to thy rest!' I come, Lord, I come!"

Jerome groaned. "The Church had ever her holy but feeble servants," he said. "Now would I give ten years of my life to save thine; but I see it may not be. Die in peace."

And so it was that in a few days more, Gerard lay a-dying in a frame of mind so holy and happy that more

than one aged saint was there to garner his dying words. In the evening he had seen Giles, and begged him not to let poor Jack starve, and to see that little Gerard's trustees did their duty, and to kiss his parents for him, and to send Denys to his friends in Burgundy: "Poor thing, he will feel so strange here without his comrade." And after that he had an interview with Jerome alone. What passed between them was never distinctly known; but it must have been something remarkable, for Jerome went from the door with his hands crossed on his breast, his high head lowered, and sighing as he went.

The two monks that watched with him till matins, related that all through the night he broke out from time to time in pious exclamations, and praises, and thanksgivings; only once they said he wandered, and thought he saw her walking in green meadows with other spirits clad in white, and beckoning him; and they all smiled and beckoned him. And both these monks said (but it might have been fancy) that just before dawn there came three light taps against the wall, one after another, very slow; and the dying man heard them, and said, "I come, love, I come."

This much is certain, that Gerard did utter these words, and prepare for his departure, having uttered them. He sent for all the monks who at that hour were keeping vigil. They came, and hovered like gentle spirits round him with holy words. Some prayed in silence for him with their faces touching the ground, others tenderly supported his head. But when one of them said something about his life of self-denial and charity, he stopped him, and, addressing them all, said, "My dear brethren, take note that he, who here dies so happy, holds not these new-fangled doctrines of man's merit. Oh, what a miserable hour were this to me an if I did! Nay, but I hold with the apostles, and their

pupils in the Church, the ancient fathers, that 'we are justified not by our own wisdom, or piety, or the works we have done in holiness of heart, but by faith.'"[1]

Then there was a silence, and the monks looked at one another significantly.

"Please you sweep the floor," said the dying Christian in a voice to which all its clearness and force seemed supernaturally restored.

They instantly obeyed, not without a sentiment of awe and curiosity.

"Make me a great cross with wood ashes."

They strewed the ashes in form of a great cross upon the floor.

"Now lay me down on it; for so will I die."

And they took him gently from his bed, and laid him on the cross of wood ashes.

"Shall we spread out thine arms, dear brother?"

"Now God forbid! Am I worthy of that?"

He lay silent, but with his eyes raised in ecstasy.

Presently he spoke half to them, half to himself. "Oh," he said with a subdued but concentrated rapture, "I feel it buoyant. It lifts me floating in the sky whence my merits had sunk me like lead."

Day broke, and displayed his face cast upward in silent rapture, and his hands together, like Margaret's.

And just about the hour she died he spoke his last word in this world:

"*Jesu.*"

And even with that word — he fell asleep.

They laid him out for his last resting-place.

Under his linen they found a horse-hair shirt. "Ah!" cried the young monks, "behold a saint!"

[1] He was citing from Clement of Rome:
"Θυ δι ἑαυτων δικαιουμεθα ουδε δια της ἡμετερας σοφιας, ἡ ευσεβειας, ἡ εργων ἑν κατεωγασαμεθα εν δσιοτητι καρδιας, αλλα δια της πιστεως." — *Epist. ad Corinth* i. 32.

Under the hair-cloth they found a long thick tress of auburn hair.

They started, and were horrified; and a babel of voices arose, some condemning, some excusing.

In the midst of which Jerome came in, and, hearing the dispute, turned to an ardent young monk called Basil, who was crying scandal the loudest. "Basil," said he, "is she alive or dead that owned this hair?"

"How may I know, father?"

"Then for aught you know it may be the relic of a saint?"

"Certes it may be," said Basil sceptically.

"You have then broken our rule, which saith, 'Put ill construction on no act done by a brother which can be construed innocently.' Who are you to judge such a man as this was? go to your cell, and stir not out for a week by way of penance."

He then carried off the lock of hair.

And when the coffin was to be closed, he cleared the cell, and put the tress upon the dead man's bosom. "There, Clement," said he to the dead face. And set himself a penance for doing it, and nailed the coffin up himself.

The next day Gerard was buried in Gouda churchyard. The monks followed him in procession from the convent. Jerome, who was evidently carrying out the wishes of the deceased, read the service. The grave was a deep one, and at the bottom of it was a lead coffin. Poor Gerard's, light as a feather (so wasted was he), was lowered, and placed by the side of it.

After the service Jerome said a few words to the crowd of parishioners that had come to take the last look at their best friend. When he spoke of the virtues of the departed, loud wailing and weeping burst forth, and tears fell upon the coffin like rain.

The monks went home. Jerome collected them in the refectory and spoke to them thus: "We have this day laid a saint in the earth. The convent will keep his trentals, but will feast, not fast; for our good brother is freed from the burden of the flesh: his labors are over, and he has entered into his joyful rest. I alone shall fast and do penance; for, to my shame I say it, I was unjust to him, and knew not his worth till it was too late. And you, young monks, be not curious to inquire whether a lock he bore on his bosom was a token of pure affection, or the relic of a saint; but remember the heart he wore beneath. Most of all, fix your eyes upon his life and conversation, and follow them an ye may, for he was a holy man."

Thus after life's fitful fever these true lovers were at peace. The grave, kinder to them than the Church, united them forever; and now a man of another age and nation, touched with their fate, has labored to build their tombstone, and rescue them from long and unmerited oblivion.

He asks for them your sympathy, but not your pity.

No, put this story to a wholesome use.

Fiction must often give false views of life and death. Here as it happens, curbed by history, she gives you true ones. Let the barrier that kept these true lovers apart prepare you for this, that here on earth there will nearly always be some obstacle or other to your perfect happiness; to their early death apply your reason and your faith, by way of exercise and preparation. For, if you cannot bear to be told that these died young, who, had they lived a hundred years, would still be dead, how shall you bear to see the gentle, the loving, and the true, glide from your own bosom to the grave, and fly from your house to heaven?

Yet this is in store for you. In every age the Master of life and death, who is kinder as well as wiser than we are, has transplanted to heaven young, earth's sweetest flowers.

I ask your sympathy, then, for their rare constancy, and pure affection, and their cruel separation by a vile heresy [1] in the bosom of the Church, but not your pity for their early but happy end.

Beati sunt qui in Domino moriuntur.

[1] Celibacy of the Clergy, an invention truly fiendish.

CHAPTER LI.

In compliance with a custom I despise, but have not the spirit to resist, I linger on the stage to pick up the smaller fragments of humanity I have scattered about: i.e., some of them, for the wayside characters have no claim on me: they have served their turn if they have persuaded the reader that Gerard travelled from Holland to Rome through human beings, and not through a population of dolls.

Eli and Catherine lived to a great age: lived so long that both Gerard and Margaret grew to be dim memories. Giles also was longevous; he went to the court of Bavaria, and was alive there at ninety, but had somehow turned into bones and leather, trumpet toned.

Cornelis, free from all rivals, and forgiven long ago by his mother, who clung to him more and more now all her brood was scattered, waited, and waited, and waited, for his parents' decease. But Catherine's shrewd word came true: ere she and her mate wore out, this worthy rusted away. At sixty-five he lay dying of old age in his mother's arms, a hale woman of eighty-six. He had lain unconscious awhile, but came to himself *in articulo mortis*, and seeing her near him, told her how he would transform the shop and premises as soon as they should be his. "Yes, my darling," said the poor old woman soothingly; and in another minute he was clay; and that clay was followed to the grave by all the feet whose shoes he had waited for.

Denys, broken-hearted at his comrade's death, was glad to return to Burgundy, and there a small pension the

court allowed him kept him until unexpectedly he inherited a considerable sum from a relation. He was known in his native place for many years as a crusty old soldier, who could tell good stories of war, when he chose, and a bitter railer against women.

Jerome, disgusted with modern laxity, retired to Italy, and, having high connections, became at seventy a mitred abbot. He put on the screw of discipline: his monks revered and hated him. He ruled with iron rod ten years. And one night he died alone, for he had not found the way to a single heart. The Vulgate was on his pillow, and the crucifix in his hand, and on his lips something more like a smile than was ever seen there while he lived; so that, methinks, at that awful hour he was not quite alone. *Requiescat in pace.* The Master he served has many servants, and they have many minds, and now and then a faithful one will be a surly one, as it is in these our mortal mansions.

The yellow-haired laddie, Gerard Gerardson, belongs not to Fiction but to History. She has recorded his birth in other terms than mine. Over the tailor's house in the Brede Kirk Straet she has inscribed:

Hæc est parva domus natus quâ magnus Erasmus;

and she has written half a dozen lives of him. But there is something left for her yet to do. She has no more comprehended *magnum Erasmum*, than any other pygmy comprehends a giant, or partisan a judge.

First scholar and divine of his epoch, he was also the heaven-born dramatist of his century. Some of the best scenes in this new book are from his mediæval pen, and illumine the pages where they come; for the words of a genius so high as his are not born to die: their immediate work upon mankind fulfilled, they may seem to lie

torpid, but, at each fresh shower of intelligence Time pours upon their students, they prove their immortal race; they revive, they spring from the dust of great libraries; they bud, they flower, they fruit, they seed, from generation to generation, and from age to age.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A THIEF, AND OTHER STORIES.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A THIEF.

The readers of "It is Never too Late to Mend" may remember that in Vol. II. the chaplain set the thief to write his life honestly. He was not to whitewash and then gild himself, nor yet to vent one long self-deceiving howl of general and therefore sham penitence, but he was to be, with God's help, his own historian and sober critic. Accordingly Thomas Robinson wrote this autobiography in —— Jail: and my readers may have noticed that at first I intended to print it with the novel.

It cost me a struggle to resign this intention; for it was the central gem of my little coronet. But the novel, without the autobiography, was five ordinary volumes by printers' calculation, and a story within a story is a frightful flaw in art.

Moreover, I was attacking settled, long-standing prejudices. Prejudice is a giant, against whom truth and humanity need to be defended with great spirit, and, in some desperate cases, with a tiger-like ferocity: "*À dur âne dur aiguillon:*" but there must be some judgment too; and, take my word for it, there always has been *some* judgment used, wherever so hard a battle is won. I feared then to multiply paradoxes, and to draw once too often on the faith of the public, as well as on its good heart, I, who carried no personal weight with me.

But I think my readers are now ripe for this strange but true story, and I dedicate it in particular to such as will deign to accept this clew to my method in writing: —

I feign probabilities; I record improbabilities: the former are conjectures, the latter truths: mixed, they make a thing not so true as gospel nor so false as history; viz., fiction.

When I startle you most, think twice before you disbelieve me. What able deceiver aims at shocking credulity? Distrust rather my oily probabilities. They should be true too if I could make them; but I can't: they are guesses.

You have seen Thomas Robinson, *alias* Hic, *alias* Ille, *alias* Iste, tinted in water-colors by me: now see him painted in oils by himself, and retouched by Mr. Eden.

A thief is a man: and a man's life is like those geographical fragments children learn "the contagious countries" by. The pieces are a puzzle: but put them together carefully, and lo! they are a map.

The thief then mapped his puzzle; and I think his work will stand.

These caged autobiographers have a great advantage as writers over other autobiographers that sing false notes of egotism in London squares, and American villas built *ære alieno.*

Carceravis has been publicly convicted. Mavis and Philomele have not met with so much justice. They could eclipse the novelist and the historian; but they don't even rival them. An alternative lies before them: to chronicle themselves and their acts, and so add great instructive pictures of man to the immortal part of literature, or to idealize, as our pedants call it, to slur, falsify, color themselves up here and tone themselves down there. Unfortunately for letters they invariably choose the liedeal: and instead of coming out bright as

stars, the interesting, curious, instructive, valuable rogues, humbugs, and courtesans they are, and so being the darlings of posterity, they go mincing to trunkerity, tame, negative, insipid, characterless creatures, not good enough for example, not bad enough for a warning, but excellent lining for a band-box.

No. It is to the detected part of the community we must look for an honest autobiography. Not that self-deception ever retires wholly from a human heart, but that in these there is no good opinion of the world to back their self-deception. It is not so with many an unconvicted rogue, who is far below an average felon: the banker who steals not from strangers but friends; steals from those who have a claim to his gratitude as well as his honesty: the rector who preaches Christ, and swindles the young curate out of every halfpenny contrary to law, because the poor boy must get a title though he buy it and begin life with debt: how will he end it? The anonymous assassin, the cowardly caitiff of a scribbler who, with no temptation but mere envy, stabs the great in the dark and truckles to them face to face. A felon is a man, and often a resolute one; but what is this thing that stabs and runs away into a hole?

The shopkeeping assassin who puts red-lead (a deadly poison) into red pepper, and sells death to those by whom he lives.

The shopkeeping assassin who puts copper, a deadly and cumulative poison, into pickles and preserves; and poisons those by whom he lives. The English assassin who poisons the young children wholesale in their sugar-plums, and then reads with virtuous indignation of the sepoys who bayoneted them in their rage instead of killing them cannily.

The miller, abandoned of God, and awaiting here on earth his eternal damnation, who, king of all these

Borgias, thief and murderer at once, poisons young and old at life's fountain, breaks life's very staff, mixes plaster of Paris with the flour that is the food of all men, the only food, alas, of more than half the world.

These and a score more respectables are the hopeless cases. A cracksman or a swell mobsman is terribly hard to cure. But these are incurable. The world's good opinion fortifies their delusion. They open their eyes for the first time in hell. A pickpocket now and then opens them in jail.

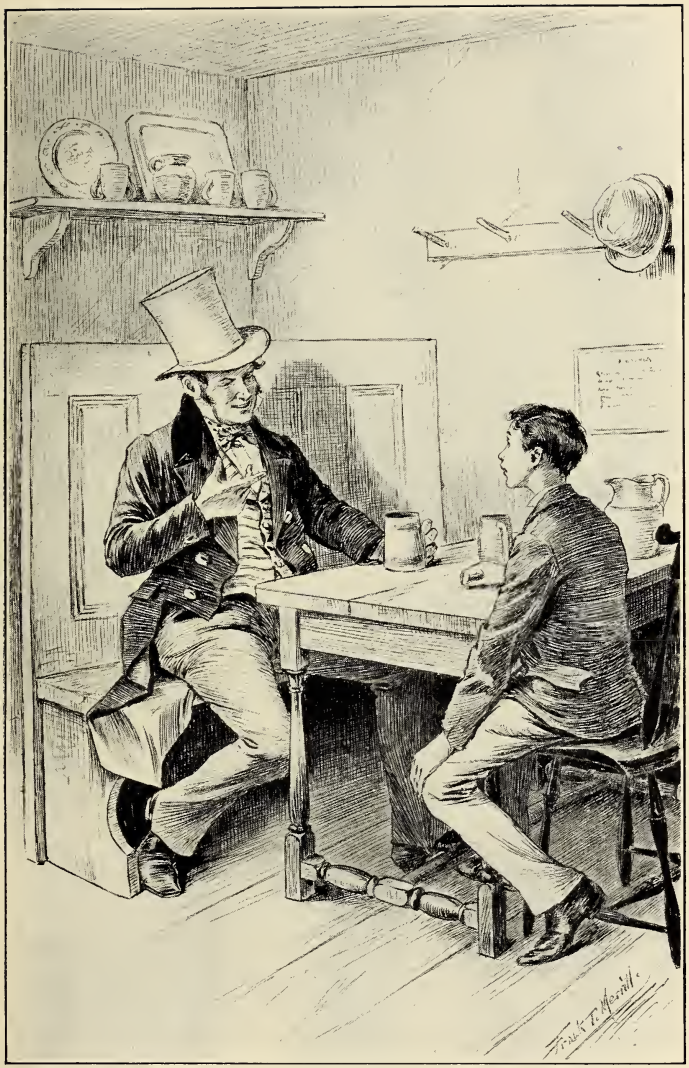
We owe to —— Jail this slippery one who paints himself a slipperyish one, and does not falsify as well as filch.

It is important to observe that this is the man's history not after the events recorded in the novel, but before. His foundation, not his roof. On this autobiographer the benign influences of religion, the solidifying effect of property, and the guardianship of a shrewd but honest wife, have since been bestowed by Heaven.

Add then this autobiography to his character as drawn by me in the novel, and you possess the whole portrait: and now it will be for you to judge whether for once we have taken a character that exists on a large scale in nature, and added it to fiction, or, here too, have printed a shadow, and called it a man.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

I DID nothing that I particularly remember until I was fifteen, except learn my lessons, with now and then a fight. I lived with my mother in Edinburgh. One day a person of gentlemanly appearance met a band of us as we were going to school, and inquired for me by name. He took me aside into a tavern, and, after treating me, revealed himself to me as my father. He also



REVEALED HIMSELF TO ME AS MY FATHER.

gave me a crown, and promised to see me again: but was unfortunately prevented, or perhaps forgot.

My education being now considered complete, I went to receive lessons in anatomy, at which I remained for the space of nine months.

I now formed an acquaintance with a young lady. (At this time I was staying with my godfather upon my mother's decease.) But she was unfortunately a Romanist, and on this account my godfather ordered me to leave off her acquaintance, which I refusing, he ordered me out of the house. I complied with this harsh mandate, but first collected[a] all the money I could find, which amounted to about fifty pounds — and with this I went to Dunfermline, and from there to the Rumbling Brigg, where I lodged with a couple well to do: I paid my board while my money lasted — but being now empty, and my host finding I was a scholar, I agreed to give him three lessons a day upon the sly, for which he privately contracted to give me secretly the money to pay his wife my board.

This lasted three months; but one evening as we were at our studies, and having neglected to lock the door, being become too bold by past impunity, the wife, who had discovered our retreat, having listened a moment or two, burst suddenly in upon us, and falling[b] on her knees, exclaimed, —

"Good heavens! am I married to a man who does not know that three times five make fifteen?" and burst into a flood of tears and reproaches.

This was the line of the table he was unfortunately repeating to me at the time.

His wife's conduct raising a counter-excitement in my pupil, and finding I had lighted a flame which would not easily be extinguished, I thought proper to retire and go back to Dunfermline. Here I learned my first trade of the many I have practised.

I engaged myself to a master weaver and petty manufacturer. Besides learning to take drafts of patterns, etc., I used to cast his accounts; but one day he sent me to the bank to draw some money; on this I absconded with the money and went to Edinburgh.

He pursued me so closely, that with the aid of the police he apprehended me before I had time to spend it; to avoid punishment I gave him back the money, all but seventeen shillings, and he, who was a good-natured man, wished me to go back to my place; but having borne a good name in the place until then, I thought shame to go back; so I went to Newcastle, after borrowing of my late master fifteen shillings for the journey.

At Newcastle I went into a chemist's shop for some cough-lozenges: now it happened that a woman in the shop asked for some medicine. I forget just now what it was, but the shop-boy took down the wrong; he took down a bottle containing camomile, I remember that — so I told the boy that he mistook the Latin term; this naturally attracted the master's attention, and he looked up and saw I was correct; so then he asked me several questions, and finding me fit for his purpose, he took me into his service — and here for a long while all my sorrows were at an end: for I took a delight in studying my master's interests and laying up knowledge.

He favored me with his instructions, and I enjoyed at times the company of his daughter, which was to me a comfort above all, and with whom I felt myself soon deep in love, and with her I spent many a happy hour after the business of the day was over, walking out in the evenings, while the moon with her bright and gentle rays gave to all things a delightful appearance, and seemed to lift up our minds to something above the grovelling cares of Time — or we heard the plaintive notes of

the nightingale breaking the silence of the night, and calling us to join him in his songs of praise to the God of Nature. But sweeter still than the voice of the nightingale was the voice of my companion, which was sweetest of all when its topic [d] would run to that portion which forms the golden part of Cupid's dart.

In these innocent joys I spent four years.

But one unfortunate evening, having a drop too much at the time, I met Miss B. as usual, and opportunity and temptation unfortunately occurring, I was guilty of a felony that has always remained on my conscience more than any of those acts I have been guilty of, which the law describes to be the highest crimes.

From that night our walks beneath the moon by the river-side were no longer innocent, and we were no longer happy.

O [e] cursed night and place that robbed a virgin of her purity! and O cursed Tyne, why did not thou overflow thy banks and drive me away? — if now thy fountain-spring was to pour out streams of flaming lava, it would not purge the disgrace out of thy dark banks — nay, if thy banks themselves were to become gold, they would not ransom the character lost on that night nor restore the rest and quiet that now fled from my pillow.

Four months had scarce elapsed before I learned that consequences of a serious kind were to be expected.

I was in great perplexity: at last, taking a desperate course, I with much hesitation asked my master for his daughter's hand.

My master, who, though a good-natured was a hasty man, turned black and red at the idea, but recovering himself soon he turned it off as a jest. I saw by this that he would never consent, and, dreading discovery, I got a friend of mine to write to me [f] from Edinburgh that my sister lay at the point of death and begged to see me.

Showing this letter to my master, I got leave of absence and a present for the journey, with which I started, promising to return in a week, but with no such intention.

I arrived at Edinburgh, and found my sister, whom I had spoken of as dying, just on the eve of marriage. I was at the wedding, but the nuptial feast was no feast to me, for it only recalled the thoughts of my own guilt.

I now began the world again.

I went to Stirling and obtained a situation with a baker; but the work was much too hard for me, so I left him in two days, and took *a* with me three pounds ten shillings; was apprehended in Glasgow, and got sixty days.

On receiving my liberty I enlisted in Her Majesty's service and was marched on board the Pique frigate bound for the West Indies.

Here I remained until we got to Plymouth, where I made my escape, but was retaken in the town and brought back to the ship and put in irons on the spar-deck under cover of a tarpaulin — this was my prison till we reached St. Vincent: we anchored here for two days, and in the confusion of getting under weigh again I watched my opportunity, and having broken my padlock the day before, I stole into the captain's cabin, he being on deck, and took away a suit of his clothes, and dropped into the water; and the weather being calm, and I being an excellent swimmer, I swam alongside a brigantine that lay at anchor in the bay, and hailing her from the surface of the water, sang out, "Hallo! are you short of hands?"

"We are," was the reply, "where do you hail from?"

"What has that to do with it?" said I. So they hauled me on board.

The master, finding I had been educated, sent me on shore to his brother who kept a store; and so now I was his shopman.

I lived with my new master: we used to come to the shop in the morning and go home at night. We lived a mile and a half out of the town in a pretty Gothic house, which stood in the middle of a delightful garden bordered by sugar-canes; in front of the house was an avenue of orange and lemon trees mixed; their branches bent with the exuberance of the fruit; and the ground glittered with great shaddocks and limes, that lay like lumps of gold, unheeded and rotting for abundance. The air too was filled with the scent of thousands of rich flowers that were scattered about, some by nature, some by the hand of man — in short, it was an earthly paradise, in which I might have ended my days if the demon of change had not filled my mind with the desire to behold once more my native country — stupid fool.

I set sail, and after a stormy passage reached the port of London.

I lodged in the Commercial Road till my money was nearly gone, and then I became disconsolate.

Wandering one day in the Ratcliffe highway it was my luck to fall in with an old acquaintance, whom I had known through being in trouble together; he introduced me to a lodging-house keeper in the neighborhood, who, after a few words with my companion, told me "it was all right, we should find means of settling."

I went to bed, and when I wanted to get up, my clothes were stolen, with the few shillings I had left. Remonstrating with the landlord, he said, "Oh, it is a mistake," and disappearing for a few minutes, during which I heard high words and a bit of a tussle, he returned with my clothes and money.

The next day, seeing me very dull, and concluding by that I was ripe for business, he inquired the cause of my uneasiness.

I told him my last shilling was melting.

He laughed at this cause of trouble.

"You don't know," said he, "you are in the mint."

"In the mint?" said I.

"Yes," was his reply; "in the mint, my boy;" and with that he took up a chisel and went to the chimney and carefully removed a loose brick, and took out of the gap a tin box: he opened the box, and coins of every sort in profusion flashed upon my bewildered eyes — and not only coins, but dies and metal of all sorts for making them.

"Now," said Crœsus, "having gone so far you must take the oath at once."

Four men and four females were then summoned, and standing in the middle of them, I took a solemn oath to this effect: —

"I hereby swear never to tell any one how to make 'shoffle,' nor where I learned it, nor yet to use any kind of language that may lead to the same, upon pain of death."

Here followed imprecations upon my eyes and limbs, if broken, such as are used among Freemasons, etc., but not being fit for your reverence's ears, I suppress that part.

The next process was to go and change a base sovereign, which I did accordingly, returning with nineteen and sixpence, and of which sixpence went for the gin.

Behold me now a shoffle-pitcher. But it was never my way to remain at the bottom of any business that I found worth studying. I therefore in the course of six months learned to coin first a shilling, then a sovereign, then the most difficult of all, a crown; and last of all to make the moulds for each of these coins; and as soon as I found I could make a mould for a crown, I dissolved partnership, and went to Gravesend on my own bottom.

Your reverence will blame me less for this revolt if I

tell you the terms on which we worked with him whom I have called Crœsus, and his name did begin with a C.

He had the half of every coin we uttered — he had the cost of the metal besides, and the half of every article purchased in the process of uttering.

Now this was not fair: at least I think not, because he did not share the risk.

I pitched on my own account about a month; then finding the trade stale, and having once or twice narrowly missed being apprehended, I returned to London and betook myself to the diligent study of housebreaking. I learned from a master how to make false keys — and having money by me, and courting the company of the best cracksmen, and listening to all they said with respect and attention, I attracted notice, and was made a member of the body, and soon after permitted to take part in a job. It was a doctor's shop in the Commercial Road, and my share came to fifty pounds. And this was only the first of many transactions of the kind.

And as it becomes every one that is in a business to master it if possible, I will tell your reverence how I attended to mine, trusting you will not make it generally public, as it is not considered honorable among us to reveal the secrets of business, but only on account of your goodness I am willing to put you on your guard, and also your own friends — that is to say, such of them as have got anything to lose: but hope it will go no farther than the jail.

Now as the chief work of practitioners in our line is to find out where the money or valuables are kept, this was my plan: —

If it was a shop, I would go in and buy something, give the shopman a sovereign, and notice where he put it, and from whence he took the change, and at the same time how the door was fastened, whether with a lock or

bar, or while my pal (for we always went in pairs) was engaging the shopman, I would take the dimensions of the same.

Or, if it was a dwelling-house, I would go and present the mistress with a card stating I was a china or glass mender, a French-polisher, a teacher of music or dancing; and try every move to get admittance into the parlor, and then you may be sure my eyes were not shut.

Or else I would go and offer the servant some article for sale as a hawker, and would chaff and flatter her, and so perhaps get a notion where the plate was kept, and the next week come and fetch it away.

In the course of a few weeks I had collected somewhere about one hundred pounds in money and valuables, and finding the police had scent of me, I left London and went down by the Leith smack to Edinburgh.

Here I visited my friends, and passed myself off in their society for a thriving tradesman.

I also sent some money to Miss B., — not that money could repay the injury I had done her, but still it would make her friends more civil to see that she wanted for nothing.

If my real character had not got wind in Newcastle, I think at this time they would have let me marry her, and I think, bad as I am, I should have mended for her sake, for she was the only woman I ever really loved *g*.

It is an old saying that "The money which comes by the wind goes by the water."

I have made thousands, but never could keep as much as a five-pound note.

In about a month nearly all my money was melted, and I set out on a cruise again.

Falling into some of my old haunts in Yorkshire, I met with a friend who manufactured base coin, and,

having passed a quantity of this and being now at my ease, I determined to study a new profession.

I therefore secluded myself from all my idle companions, took a quiet lodging, bought several medical books, and studied the human frame and the disorders to which it is subject.

I studied night and day with the same diligence I had given to coining, housebreaking, and my other professions.

In about a month I considered myself fit to start, which I accordingly did with as much pomp as I could command, having seen how far that goes towards success in the learned professions.

I engaged a servant with a handsome livery to deliver my bills at the most respectable doors, and attend upon me when I addressed the public.

I had a thousand bills printed, representing myself as Dr. Scott from Edinburgh, and I furnished myself with testimonials from respectable parties; I mean, that would have been, but who, in point of fact, had no existence: and printed them at the foot of my bills.

My plan was, on entering a town, first to go for the more respectable customers by putting up at a good inn, making friends with the landlord, and sending my footman round with my bills — but before leaving I used to appear in my true colors, as an itinerant quack.

In this capacity I used to harangue the people and sell my drugs.

In my public discourses I always ran down the regular practitioner, as we are all obliged to do, and the plan I used to follow was cool irony — I found this went farther than pretending to get into a heat.

Unlike most quacks, I did not apply one or two remedies to every disorder, and I met with wonderful success, especially with the women; partly, I think,

because with them imagination goes far, and my patter inspired them with more confidence than the regular doctors could, not having the gift of the gab.

While travelling as a doctor, I never would accept money from any of my patients until the disease, whatever it might be, took a turn for the better; and even then, my charges were always low; but to make up I did pass a deal of base coin wherever I travelled.

The following were some of my most remarkable cures: —

The landlady of a public-house at York, of a dysentery.

At Wakefield I reduced an imposthume, which the proprietor was going to have cut, if it had not been for me.

At Hull I actually cured a respectable woman of a cataract, and was praised in the public journals.

These and a hundred ordinary cures are the benefits I rendered the public in return for the many wrongs I have done it.

I had been practising pharmacy some three months, when one day I received a letter from Newcastle.

It was from Miss B.'s uncle, telling me I might visit her now.

The letter was very short, and there was something about it I did not understand; so that, instead of filling me with delight as such a letter would a while ago, I set out for Newcastle flush of cash but full of perplexity.

I reached Newcastle, and lest her friends should have changed their mind again, and receive me with an affront, I went to an ale-house convenient to her residence, and sent for her younger brother, who had never been so much against me as the others.

He came directly, and I began to put a dozen ques-

tions to him: but he maintained silence; he hung his head and said, "Don't ask me — you will soon know — and since you are here, come without loss of time," and he led the way in gloomy silence.

I was taken into the house, and after some little delay was allowed to go up into her room — I shall never forget it.

Her cheeks that used to be like two roses, were now pale and ghastly, and her beaming eyes were dull and sunk in her head; only her voice and her smile were as sweet as ever.

Her first word was, "I have only waited for this" — then she stretched out her hand and thanked me in a sweet and composed tone of voice, "for coming to perform the last part of a husband's duty" — but here her feelings overcame her, and the poor thing burst into a flood of tears, and I fell on my knees and sobbed and cried with her, and her relations somehow felt that they were not to come between us any more now, and they looked at one another and left the room without any noise, and we were alone a little while.

And then I kneeled down again, and prayed her to forgive the injury I had done her person and character — and then she answered, like a woman, that she was to blame, and not I — and this answer from her, and she dying, went through me like a knife, and I prayed to die for her, or at least to die with her; and bursting into unmanly and useless grief, and grovelling in anguish and remorse upon the floor, some of them came in and interfered for her sake, and very properly led me away — and not in an unkind manner, for which may God bless them any way.

I hope your reverence may never feel as I did — I had no acute sense of grief or pain — bodily or mental pain would have been a relief — I felt dead — my body seemed dead, my heart seemed dead.

I crawled to my inn, and crawled into bed, and lay sleepless but motionless till daybreak. Then I rose and went down to the river-side and walked up and down — and at about nine, when I thought the family would be up, I went to the house.

The moment I came in sight of the house, I saw all the shutters were up. But it gave me scarcely any shock, for I was stone, and I seemed to know before this that all was over.

They wished me to see her, but I was unable then — but the day before she was buried I took a last look at her — it did not seem to be her, but only some shell or frame she had once inhabited — now a ruinous heap of corruption: and that is an awful word.

Is it a castle, — there was a time when the heart of the bold soldier burned with ardor to defend it.

Is it a senate, — there was a time when the loud applause of eloquence thundered from its roof.

Or is it a temple, — there was a time when the white-stoled priest called down the fire from heaven to bless the sacrifice.

But here is a temple, one not made with hands, the architecture of which is too sublime for our minds to conceive, a temple that was erected to be the seat of its Maker, one in which dwelt not only the image but the spirit of its Creator: let me ask then why was it thus left desolate, and whither has its tenant gone?

Tell me, ye seas, whose waves roll and ripple at our feet or thunder on our vessels, tell me have ye seen the airy stranger float along your surface, and whither has it winged its way?

Tell me, ye winds, harpers of the mountain forest; methinks ye could; for there are times ye whisper gently and seem as if ye were holding communion with departed spirits; tell me, have ye seen this airy stranger,

and whither has she gone? Tell me, ye dazzling worlds that perform your regular but mystic dance upon the airy surface; tell me, have ye seen this airy stranger wing her way through your aërial canopy, and whither has it gone?

Such thoughts as these followed the first anguish at losing her, and to all these inquiries one answer seemed to come back to me from all creation —

"The body returns to the dust, and the soul to God who gave it."

And when I compared this answer with my own conduct, I felt I was far behind; and over my poor sweetheart's grave I vowed to amend my life — that one day I might hope to meet her again. The first three days after the funeral I tried in every direction for an honest situation.

The fourth, I fell from all my good resolutions.

In my despair I had recourse to drink, and was undone. I was drunk for a whole week, and by the end of that time was penniless.

Let mankind take warning by my fate, and not fancy the habit of drink can be formed with safety. Up to this time, though like all the world I had wasted a large portion of my gains upon drink, yet I had never gone at it like a madman. But what of that? the habit was formed, it was there waiting like a lion for its prey, waiting for a great opportunity, your reverence — one came — I was in despair, — my appetite was gone, and drink comforted my stomach: my heart was dead, and drink made it beat. I had recourse to this solace, and became a beast. As I said before, for a whole week I was never not to say sober.

No man and no woman is safe that has once formed the fatal habit of looking to drink for solace — or cheerfulness — or comfort *h*. While the world goes well

they will likely be temperate: but the habit is built, the railroad to destruction is cut ready for use, the trams are laid down, and the station-houses erected; and the train is on the line waiting only for the locomotive. Well, the first great trouble or hopeless grief is the locomotive: it comes to us, it grapples us, and away we go in a moment down the line we have been years constructing like a flash of lightning to the devil.

I woke one afternoon sober and penniless.

From drunkenness to thieving is not a very wide leap even to those who are beginning an evil career — to me it was no more than crossing a gutter. I pawned my watch and got on board the steamer for London, and back to my old haunts.

I soon fell in with an old pal and borrowed ten pounds of him and began first to pass and after that to coin "shoffle;" and, when that was not quick work enough, took to housebreaking and shoplifting again.

But in the early part of this chapter of my career, having very little cash, for part of the ten pounds went for clothes, I was obliged to be moderate in my expenses, and I accordingly spent a week in a lodging-house kept by an old friend of mine, which I will try to describe.

The house itself is divided into two separate compartments beside the bed-chambers.

The first, or state apartment, is for professional thieves.

The back room is for those street trades that lie between thieving and commerce.

My friend ushered me in here, and there were more than a score of them all gazing with their mouths open at the new-comer — all engaged at various labors, and talking a dozen different branches of cant.

Some were making mats, some arranging articles for sale in their baskets or on their trays, some making

matches, the "askers" selling their begged bread at three halfpence the pound, another tuning up his fiddle, the whole lot comparing notes to the detriment of the public, the beggar telling the match-maker at what house they gave him meat or money, the hawker and mat-maker exchanging the same sort of profitable information, by which many an easy-going gentleman, that thinks himself obscure, gets his habits published among the dregs of society, and perhaps a nickname tacked on to him, and more people knowing him by it than know him by his own.

Then there was the "buzzer" practising his necromancy; presently in came a "sneaker" with half a firkin of butter for sale at fourpence per pound, on which the women fell to abusing their men because they had not enough money to buy ten or twelve pounds; children crying, and all in a mighty way because the fountain is not boiling.

In the corner was a handsome young female evidently a stranger, biting the end of her apron-string, her mind not being able to comprehend the fulness of the scene.

"Here is a sweetheart for you and all," said my friend. "She is waiting for her husband to come back," added he, winking to me.

Her husband, as she had called the man who had enticed her from her friends, never came back, and indeed nobody except herself ever thought he would.

Then to amuse her mind I requested her to go an errand for me — she agreed — I gave her a base sovereign and sent her to buy groceries, which when she had done, I invited her to take tea with me, and over our tea she told me her story without reserve.

Finding she was a decent girl, and apparently had never made but this one slip, I determined to enter into partnership with her if she would consent.

Strange as it may appear, I felt the want of a female companion now in a way I never had until Miss B.'s death. I believe my nerves were shaken by that sad event, and I began to want to see a woman's face opposite me, and to hear the soft notes of a female voice.

Three days after our first meeting we were married according to the custom of the house; i.e., a traveller dressed in a white sheet, with holes cut for his arms, read a few sentences of the marriage-service to us — he then drew a line on the floor with a piece of chalk and made us leap over it in succession, while he recited in a solemn voice the following: —

"Leap rogue, and follow jade,
Man and wife for evermore."

Which concluded the ceremony, and we were man and wife in the eyes of all the lodgers, unless we should agree to be untied, which could only be done by the same party, or his successor, and with other ceremonies, and above all — fees! We soon left this house and set up a lodging of our own. She made me very comfortable when I was at home, and I let her want for nothing.

I lived nearly three years in London this bout, and, owing to the company I kept, I got the cockney phrase and twang, so that I fear I will never entirely get rid of them. Indeed, I am commonly taken for a cockney, which is a sad disgrace to a man born north of the Tweed *i*.

At the end of this time my wife's friends sent to beg her to come home, which she asked my leave to do — I consented, and we were untied, and parted with mutual expressions of esteem. Finding London rather dull after she was gone, I agreed to join a gang of us that were about to make a provincial trip.

We went to Mortimer, a village in Berkshire — the scene of our business was Reading and its neighborhood — we committed some very daring robberies in Reading and Caversham, that will not soon be forgotten.

We broke into one house in Reading in open day — it was Sunday, and the whole family were gone to church — we rifled the house, and left a paper on the table, on which, I am ashamed to tell your reverence, I wrote, —

"Watch as well as pray!"

But this could not last forever. I had been out fishing all day (a sport I am very fond of) when returning towards dusk I saw a strange face at one of the windows of our house.

Not quite understanding this, I turned back and went a mile round, to where I could see the back of the house without being recognized — and my caution was not wasted.

I soon found that the house was in the possession of the police, and that all or most of my comrades were nabbed.

Having some money about me I decamped, and returning to town, found two of my companions about to start for California, dazzled by the accounts we heard of the fortunes made there by digging and levying the roadside tax on those who dug.

I joined them, and after a voyage of six months we landed at San Francisco.

Your reverence has often heard me talk of my adventures in that country, and you have often forbade me to be always thinking and talking about gold — I will therefore abstain from relating my adventures in the New World — in fact they would of themselves fill a

volume — suffice it to say I had at one time twelve hundred pounds in money and gold-dust, but I wasted the greater part, and by a just retribution was robbed of the rest.

I returned to London with ten pounds and a nugget which I sold for twenty-five pounds in Threadneedle Street.

And now, not liking the smoke of London, after one or two successful jobs, which swelled my stock to a matter of sixty pounds, I bought some new clothes, and went down to Reading, but not thinking it prudent to remain there long, I crossed the river and went into Oxfordshire.

I heard of a farmer who sometimes took a lodger, and as I was well dressed, and he too honest to be suspicious, we soon came to terms.

The farmer was George Fielding, of whom your reverence has often heard me speak.

I never met with such a character as his: he did not seem to know anything about lying, far less taking anything without paying for it.

When I first lodged with him, I had, of course, an eye to business, but I got so fond of him[k] I could not take anything of his — and he was attached to me too, until one unlucky day he found out my real character; and then he insulted me — and now he despises me.

I spent four innocent months here, and I often thought, if I could have such an honest man as George Fielding always close to my side all day, I could keep from taking anything all the rest of my life — but unluckily my money gradually melted; in which state I went to a fair in the neighborhood. I saw a rich farmer take out some notes and make a payment, and put the rest back into a side pocket — almost before it reached the bottom of his pocket it was in mine.

The country banks close at three o'clock, and it was near four at the time — I got rid therefore of the Bank of England notes, meaning to change the others when a good opportunity should occur.

But meantime I suppose measures were taken against me — any way the police came down from London, and I was seized, identified, and put to an open shame.

This, the last passage of my life, went nearer to drive me to despair than all the rest; for I had begun to taste the sweets of innocence, and to love honesty under the name of George Fielding.

I was convicted at the assizes, and being recognized as having been seven times in prison, and notoriously guilty of many felonies besides, they sentenced me to twelve months imprisonment, and transportation for ten years.

I have been six months in this jail, where I have met with most cruel treatment, being forced to labor beyond my strength even when weakened by sickness; and punished for mere inability: and, besides the harm this wrought my body, it hardened my heart and made me look on mankind as my enemy.

But, after that, your reverence was sent here by Heaven to our relief.

It was my good-fortune to find in you a gentleman whose heart was large enough to feel for all who suffer, and whose understanding could comprehend that a convict is a man, and this has been a godsend to me, and may the Almighty bless you for all your goodness, and above all for your constant battle to save us poor fellows' souls, and, when you stand one day at the great tribunal, may many a black sheep stand round you that the world perhaps took for goats to the last!

Well, sir, when I look back upon my past life, of which what I have written here is no more than a single page out of volumes and volumes, when I think of the

many opportunities I have had of doing good to myself and others, and then think of how it all ends — a convicted felon, doomed to pass the remainder of my life in shame and exile, debarred from situations where I could execute my talents, and felon printed upon me, I am whiles tempted to put the gas-pipe that is in my cell into my mouth and suck the poisonous vapor into my lungs, and thus with crime to end a life of crime. But then your face rises up before me and expostulates with a look, and bids me be patient and hope, also your words that I ought to be thankful to God for His mercy in giving me time to reflect on the enormity of my crimes, and not cutting me down as a cumberer of the ground.

But, above all, I feel it would be ungrateful to you and grieve you if I was to make away with myself under your eye; or even to despair.

I will try my best to be somebody yet if only for your reverence's sake; for it is a shame a gentleman like you should give his days and his nights, and all the blood in his heart, to saving us poor fellows from perdition, and be continually disappointed.

So once more thanking your reverence for all kindness, and for setting me to write this, which has amused and whiled away some weary hours, and begging you to excuse all faults and blunders, for in my busy life writing is an art I have had no time to give my mind to, I close this record of the disgraceful past, and, here in my cell, envying the cripple round whom the free air plays and on whom the sun shines, I await the gloomy future.

THOMAS *
— *alias* WILKINSON,
— *alias* LYON,
— *alias* MCPHERSON,
— *alias* SCOTT,
— *alias* HOWARD,
— *alias* ROBINSON.

a. "Collected" and "took with me." No such thing. "Stole" is the word that represents the transactions. Always be precise! Never tamper with words; call a spade a spade and a picklock a picklock — that is the first step towards digging instead of thieving.

b. She did not fall on her knees; you put that in for stage effect, and it produces none, the gesture is so manifestly inappropriate.

c. And he lent it you. Pause a moment and look at yourself by the side of this honest (irascible?) and magnanimous, honest man, whose hand a single paragraph of yours made me long to grasp in mine.

d. "When its topic would run to that portion which forms the golden part of Cupid's dart." — This sentence is rank nonsense — no more of this, or I shall fear I have warmed a poetaster.

e. "O cursed night and place that robbed a virgin of her purity. And O cursed Tyne" that did not turn policeman — and oh blessed Robinson that was alone to blame. Why, what bombast is this? Always put the saddle on the right horse! and don't be so fond of cursing — believe me, it is a bad habit. You cursed Mr. Hawes who needed all our prayers — you cursed him in earnest: and now you are off at a tangent evading those just expressions of serious self-reproach proper to the situation, and cursing in jest the coaly Tyne, benefactor of a province, and the night, a blessing wide as the world. Bless and curse not!

f. The turning-point of your life. Had you stayed at Newcastle and faced it out like a man, there would have been a storm, I grant you, the old chemist would have raved: but nature is strong; for his daughter's sake he would have ended by marrying you to her, and you would be master of the shop now — an honest citizen of Newcastle; but though you had given up theft you had not forgotten how to lie.

Observe! — this is a new starting-point; all the rest of your life will be a consequence of that single falsehood — so now we shall see whether the Bible is wrong in its hatred and terror of a lie.

g. You did not love her, don't flatter yourself; if a thief loved a woman he would steal her; if a five-pound note had been as easy to filch from the old chemist as this poor girl, I know who would have taken it, collected it, removed it, abstracted it, and changed its relative situation. You never loved her. But I fear she loved you.

h. Real wisdom and observation in this remark.

i. Why is a twang worse than a brogue? and why should it disgrace the native of a small nation to be taken for the native of a great nation? Is a sucker nobler than its tree?

j. "Ashamed?" — The little humbug could not resist showing me his wit, of which he says he is ashamed.

k. That I can readily believe of you, and it is by your affections we must try and save you with God's help.

I sum up your career as Dr. Johnson did the "Beggar's Opera."

> Here is a labefaction of all principle.
> Many good impulses — dug in sand.
> Many good feelings — unstable as water.
> Many good resolves — written in air.
> But not the thousandth part of a grain of principle.

But how human your sad story is in every part; yet there are people who will dream that you and your fellows are monsters, and prescribe monstrous remedies for your souls.

I thank you for the general candor of your narrative: it renders my task a little easier.

I have many things to say to you seriously and sadly about points in this story: above all, I must show you

that you are not innocent of poor Miss B.'s death, whose unhappy fate has made me very sad — my poor fellow, you have not yet comprehended how much this poor girl loved you: nor the variety of tortures she was enduring all the while you were jaunting it at your ease all over the world. These killed her — I will make you see this and repent far more deeply than you have done. Half the cruelty in the world comes by want of intelligence.

I must compliment you on your literary powers: this is really an astonishing composition for a complete novice: I observe that towards the close of it, short as it is, you have already become a better writer than you were at starting — your style more disengaged, fewer Sir Ablative Absolutes, polysyllables, involved sentences, and less ungrammatical eloquence.

If it will give you any pleasure to hear it, know that in a pretty large experience of scholars, artists, lawyers, and men of business, I never encountered a man with livelier and more versatile powers than yourself. You ought to be leading the House of Commons; and you are here!

I do not, however, admire most the passages on which you probably pride yourself; for instance, the sublime passage beginning "Is it a castle?"

Here rhetoric intruded unseasonably upon feeling. The plain narrative of your poor sweetheart's death-bed, of her telling you woman-like that she was more to blame for being tempted than you for tempting her, her death and your remorse, moistened my eyes as I read: but your sublime reflections dried them on the spot.

Your eloquence reminded me that you are a humbug, and never really loved this poor girl; all the worse for you.

You felt, and feel remorse, and shall feel more, but you never loved Miss B.: do not flatter yourself.

It is hardly fair to dissect the sublime; still permit me with due timidity and respect to suggest that you have taken similitudes and called them distinctions — contrasted where you should have compared. A mouldering castle, a mute senate house, and a ruined temple are not unlike, but like, an inanimate body.

What says the poet, writing of a skull?

> "Can all that saint, sage, sophist, ever writ,
> People this lonely hall, this tenement refit?"

In matters literary, begin with logic; build on that rhetoric or what ornaments you will.

In matters moral, begin with a grain of sense and principle, and on them raise the ingenuity and versatile talents of Mr. Thomas Robinson! Thus you shall not sublimely stumble in letters, nor in conduct be an ingenious, able, versatile, gifted, clever, blockhead and fool.

You called the nightingale "him."

This shocks an innocent prejudice.

In science, it is to be feared there are cock nightingales. But you are favoring us with a poetic touch, and in poetry nightingales are all hens.

Remind me some day to tell you the story of Philomele.

Your closing sentences are sad, and would make me sad or sadder if I saw your real mind in them: but this is only a temporary despondency, the effect of separate confinement, which is beginning to tell on you spite of all we can do.

I shall get your sentence shortened, and you will soon cross the water: so you see there is nothing to despond about — your prospects were never so bright — you are now master of one craft and well advanced in others; you are at no man's mercy; your own hands avail to

reed, and keep, and clothe you. Be honest, and you will always be well off. Consecrate your talents to God's service, and you will most likely be happy even in this world. And for the short time you have to remain in confinement we will find you all the occupation and amusement the law permits; and if you ever feel greatly depressed, ring that moment for Evans or me, and we will chase the foul fiend away.

So cheer up, and don't fancy you are alone, when by putting out your hand you can bring an honest fellow to your side who pities you, and me who love you.

F. E.

PRISON THOUGHTS.

Caged in a prison cell, how sad, yet true,
Does the lone heart bring former scenes to view,
Till the racked mind with bitter frensy driven,
Maligns the just decrees of Man and Heaven.
The grated barrs, and iron studded door,
The cold bare walls, and chilly pavement floor,
The hammock, table, stool, and pious book,
The jailors stealthy tread, and jealous look,
Force back the maddened thoughts to other days,
When joyous youth was crowned with hopeful bays:
E'er rank luxuriant Folly reigned supreme,
As if this Life was nothing but a dream,
Or the dire Cup had seared the unblighted heart,,
And caused all holy feelings to depart, —
E'er Each sweet hour so innocently gay,
Passed like a mellow Summers' eve away.
Cursed be the hour, when first I turned astray.
From keeping sacred Gods own hallowed day —
When first I learned to sip the poisoned bowl,
That kills the body and corrupts the soul.
'Twas then my godly lessons, one by one,
Fled from my giddy heart till all were gone,
And left behind a waste and dreary wild,
A conscience hardened; and a soul defiled.

— Oh! when I think on what I've been; and see,
My present state, and think what I may be,
Dispair, and horror, burns and boils within,
For years of Folly and continued sin;
Until my brain seems bursting with the dread,
Of Heaven's just judgments falling on my head.
No banefull passions fired my tranquill mind,
No wild unruly thoughts raged unconfined,
But all was fair, and gladsome as the grove,
Where warbling songsters live in artless love — .
— How changed my lot, — No Sister, Mother, Sire,
Now fondly sit, around the wintry fire;
No household song beguiles the lengthened night,
No homely jest creates a fond delight,
No sabbath morning sees us now engage,
In rap't attention on the holy page,
Or hears the swelling notes of praise and prayer,
Borne on the breese, & floating on the Air.
Oh! could my parents shades but bend on earth,
They'd mourn like me the morning of my birth, .
— Almighty Father! — God of Life and Death, !
Give, oh! give *me*, a true and living Faith,
Bestow Thy quickening Spirit, and impart
Thy saving Grace to tranquillize my heart,
That I may better live, for time to come,
And rear my spirit for Thy heavenly home. !

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

A sermon preached in the Chapel of * Jail, on Sunday, 9th January, 1849, from Matthew 5th and 17th, by the Rev. Francis Eden and versified

BY ONE OF THE PRISONERS.

'Mid rolling clouds of fearfull smoke,
'Mid lightnings flash, and thunders roar,
'Mid loud continued sounds, which shook,
The startled earth from shore to shore, !
'Mid volumes of devouring flame,
Unseen, yet felt, the Almighty came, !

Lo! on Mount Sinia's giddy height,
Is reared Jehovahs awfull throne,
Pregnant with Heavens ethereal light,
Too glorious to be gazed upon,
While beams of dazzling brightness bound
The Circuit of the hallowed ground;

Hark! as the Appalling voice of God,
Proclaims the Law of Life and Death,
Nature, o'erburdened with the load,
Holds hard her almost fleeting breath.
While sunless heaven, and darkened air
Are hung with blackness of dispair,!

Offspring of Gentile, and of Jew,
Descendants of a common stock,
These great eternal Laws for you
Were thundered from Mount Sinia's rock;
And ill or good on him shall fall,
Who breaks but one, or keeps them all.

But oh! weak man can n'eer obey,
Laws with such fearfull justice fraught.
For every moment of the day
He sins in Word or deed, or thought.
The Law of Death would thus enslave him,
Did not a pardoning Gospel save him,,

From Calvary's hill a stream proceeds,
Whose cleansing merits all may share,
Aye, even although their guilt exceeds
The weight of what the earth can bear.
For Christs atoning blood can clean.
A hell deserving world from sin.

No lightnings flash, no scowling sky,
No trembling mount of smoke and flame,
No crashing thunder boomed from high.
When our Great Mediator came:
But Seraphs sounds announced to earth
Glad tidings of a Saviours birth.

No chosen consecrated priest,
  No heaps of slain or seas of blood,
Nor solemn Fast, nor stated Feast,
  Can now appease a Jealous God,
Or open up a Fount of Grace,
To Adams unregenerate race,

An humble heart, a lowly mind,
  A contrite and believing soul,
Where Truth and Mercy are enshrined,
  Beyond a sinfull world's controul,
Is all the God of Heaven will claim,
For those who own Immanuels name;!

How goodly are the steps of those,
  Who walk in humbleness of heart,
And with well grounded hopes have chose
  The Gospels sure and better part.
To such the Law of works is dead,
Through Faith in Christ, their living head.

But, as Jehovahs dread decree,
  Does with a Saviours Love unite,
So let our Faith and Works agree,
  In one continued bond of Light:
For Faith, and Works, if used alone,
Can n'eer for guilty deeds atone.

Then fly ye Sinners to the Cross,
  There let your eager hopes be bound,
Count all things else but dung and dross,
  To win Christ, and in him be found,
So shall your Christian race be blest,
With Heavens prepared Eternal Rest!

* Jail, 3rd Feby 1848.

Prisoner's name — Thomas Robinson.

JACK OF ALL TRADES.

A MATTER-OF-FACT ROMANCE.

There are nobs in the world, and there are snobs.

I regret to say I belong to the latter department.

There are men that roll through life, like a fine new red ball going across Mr. Lord's cricket-ground on a sunshiny day; there is another sort that have to rough it in general, and above all to fight tooth and nail for the quartern-loaf — and not always win the battle; I am one of this lot.

One comfort, folk are beginning to take an interest in us; I see nobs of the first water looking with a fatherly eye into our affairs, our leaden taxes and feather incomes, our fifteen per cent on undeniable security when the rich pay but three and a half; our privations and vexations; our dirt and distresses; and one day a literary gent, that knows my horrible story, assured me that my ups and downs would entertain the nobility, gentry, and commonalty of these realms.

"Instead of grumbling to me," says he, "print your troubles; and I promise you all the world will read them, and laugh at them."

"No doubt, sir," said I rather ironical, "all the world is at leisure for that."

"Why, look at the signs of the times," says he, "can't you see workmen are up? so take us while we are in the

humor, and that is now. We shall not always be for squeezing honey out of weeds, shall we?"—"Not likely, sir," says I. Says he, "How nice it will be to growl wholesale to a hundred thousand of your countrymen (which they do love a bit of a growl), instead of growling retail to a small family that has got hardened to you!" And there he had me; for I am an Englishman, and proud of it, and attached to all the national habits, except delirium tremens. In short, what with him inflaming my dormant conceit, and me thinking, "Well, I can but say my say and then relapse into befitting silence," I did one day lay down the gauge and take up the pen, in spite of my wife's sorrowful looks.

She says nothing, but you may see she does not believe in the new tool, and that is cheerful and inspiriting to a beginner.

However, there is a something that gives me more confidence than all my literary friend says about "workmen being up in the literary world," and that is, that I am not the hero of my own story.

Small as I sit here behind my wife's crockery, and my own fiddles, in this thundering hole, Wardour Street, I was for many years connected with one of the most celebrated females of modern times; her adventures run side by side with mine; she is the bit of romance that colors my humble life, and my safest excuse for intruding on the public.

CHAPTER I.

Father and mother lived in King Street, Soho: he was a fiddle-maker, and taught me the A B C of that science — at odd times; for I had a regular education, and a very good one, at a school in West Street. This part of my life was as smooth as glass; my troubles did not begin till I was thirteen: at that age my mother died, and then I found out what she *had been* to me: that was the first and the worst grief; the next I thought bad enough; coming in from school one day, about nine months after her death, I found a woman sitting by the fire opposite father.

I came to a stand in the middle of the floor, with two eyes like saucers staring at the pair, so my father introduced me.

"This is your new mother. Anne, this is John."

"Come and kiss me, John," says the lady. Instead of which John stood stock-still, and burst out roaring and crying without the least leaving off staring, which, to be sure, was a cheerful, encouraging reception for a lady just come into the family. I roared pretty hard for about ten seconds, then stopped dead short, and says I, with a sudden calm, the more awful for the storm that had raged before, "I'll go and tell Mr. Paley!" and out I marched.

Mr. Paley was a little hump-backed tailor with the heart of a dove and the spirit of a lion or two. I made his acquaintance through pitching into two boys, that were queering his protuberances all down Princes Street, Soho — a kind of low humor he detested; and he had

taken quite a fancy to me; we were hand and glove, the old man and me.

I ran to Paley and told him what had befallen upon the house; he was not struck all of a heap as I thought he would be: and he showed me it was legal, of which I had not an idea, and his advice was, "Put a good face on it, or the house will soon be too hot to hold you, boy."

He was right: I don't know whether it was my fault or hers, or both's, but we could never mix. I had seen another face by that fireside and heard another voice in the house that seemed to me a deal more melodious than hers, and the house did become hotter, and the inmates' looks colder than agreeable; so one day I asked my father to settle me in some other house not less than a mile from King Street, Soho. He and stepmother jumped at the offer, and apprenticed me to Mr. Dawes. Here I learned more mysteries of guitar-making, violin-making, etc., and lived in tolerable comfort nearly four years; there was a ripple on the water though. My master had a brother, a thick-set, heavy fellow, that used to bully my master, especially when he was groggy, and less able to take his own part. My master being a good fellow, I used to side with him, and this brought me a skinful of sore bones more than once, I can tell you. But one night after some months of peace, I heard a terrible scrimmage, and running down into the shop-parlor I found Dawes junior pegging into Dawes senior, no allowance, and him crying blue murder.

I was now an able-bodied youth between sixteen and seventeen years of age, and, having a little score of my own with the attacking party, I opened quite silent and business-like with a one, two, and knocked him into a corner flat, perpendicular. He was dumfoundered for a moment, but the next he came out like a bull at me. I stepped on one side and met him with a blow on the

side of the temple and knocked him flat horizontal; and when he offered to rise I shook my fist at him and threatened him he should come to grief if he dared to move.

At this he went on quite a different lay: he lay still and feigned dissolution with considerable skill, to frighten us; and I can't say I felt easy at all, but my master, who took cheerful views of everything in his cups, got the enemy's tumbler of brandy-and-water, and, with hiccups and absurd smiles and a teaspoon, deposited the contents gradually on the various parts of his body.

"Lez revive 'm!" said he.

This was low life to come to pass in a respectable tradesman's back-parlor. But when grog comes in at the door, good manners walk to the window, ready to take leave if requested. Where there is drink there is always degradation of some sort or degree; put that in your tumblers and sip it!

After this no more battles. The lowly apprentice's humble efforts (pugilistic) restored peace to his master's family.

Six months of calm industry now rolled over, and then I got into trouble by my own fault.

Looking back upon the various fancies, and opinions, and crotchets that have passed through my head at one time or another, I find that, between the years of seventeen and twenty-four, a strange notion beset me; it was this: that women are all angels.

For this chimera I now began to suffer, and continued to at intervals till the error was rooted out — with their assistance.

There were two women in my master's house, his sister aged twenty-four, and his cook aged thirty-seven; with both these I fell ardently in love; and so, with my sentiments, I should have with six, had the house held

half a dozen. Unluckily my affections were not accompanied with the discretion so ticklish a situation called for. The ladies found one another out, and I fell a victim to the virtuous indignation that fired three bosoms.

The cook, in virtuous indignation that an apprentice should woo his master's sister, told my master.

The young lady, in virtuous indig. that a boy should make a fool of "that old woman," told my master, who, unluckily for me, was now the quondam Dawes junior; Dawes senior having retired from the active business and turned sleeping and drinking partner.

My master, whose v. i. was the strongest of the three, since it was him I had leathered, took me to Bow Street, made his complaint, and forced me to cancel my indentures; the cook with tears packed up my Sunday suit; the young lady opened her bedroom-door three inches and shut it with a don't-come-anigh-me slam; and I drifted out to London with eighteen-pence and my tools.

On looking back on this incident of my life, I have a regret; a poignant one; it is that some good Christian did not give me a devilish good hiding into the bargain then and there. I did not feel quite strong enough in the spirits to go where I was sure to be blown up; so I skirted King Street and entered the Seven Dials, and went to Mr. Paley and confessed my sins.

How differently the same thing is seen by different eyes! all the morning I had been called a young villain, first by one, then by another, till at last I began to see it: Mr. Paley viewed me in the light of martyr, and I remember I fell into his views on the spot.

Paley was a man that had his little theory about women, and it differed from my juvenile one.

He held that women are at bottom the seducers, men the seduced. "The men court the women, I grant you,

but so it is the fish that runs after the bait," said he. "The women draw back? yes, and so does the angler draw back the bait when the fish are shy, don't he? and then the silly gudgeons misunderstand the move, and make a rush at it, and get hooked — like you."

Holding such vile sentiments he shifted all the blame off my shoulders; he turned to and abused the whole gang, as he called the family in Litchfield Street I had just left, instead of reading me the lesson for the day, which he ought, and I should have listened to from him — perhaps.

"Now then, don't hang your head like that," shouted the spunky little fellow, "snivelling and whimpering at your time of life! we are going to have a jolly good supper, you and I, that is what *we* are going to do; and you shall sleep here: my daughter is at school; you shall have her room. I am in good work — thirty shillings a week — that is plenty for three, Lucy and you and me (himself last). Your father isn't worth a bone button, and your mother isn't worth the shank to it: I'm your father, and your mother into the bargain, for want of a better: you live with me and snap your fingers at Dawes and all his crew — ha, ha! — a fine loss to be sure — the boy is a fool — cooks and coquettes and fiddle-touters, rubbish not worth picking up out of a gutter — they be d——d!"

And so I was installed in Miss Paley's apartment, Seven Dials; and nothing would have made my adopted parent happier than for me to be put my hands in my pockets, and live upon goose and cabbage. But downright laziness was never my character. I went round to all the fiddle-shops and offered, as bold as brass, to make a violin, a tenor or a bass, and bring it home. Most of them looked shy at me, for it was necessary to trust me with the wood, and to lend me one or two of the higher

class of tools, such as a turning-saw, and a jointing-plane.

At last I came to Mr. Dodd in Berners Street; here my father's name stood me in stead. Mr. Dodd risked his wood and the needful tools, and in eight days I brought him, with conceit and trepidation mixed in equal part, a violin, which I had sometimes feared it would frighten him, and sometimes hoped it would charm him. He took it up, gave it one twirl round, satisfied himself it was a fiddle, good, bad, or indifferent, put it in the window along with the rest, and paid for it as he would for a penny roll. I timidly proposed to make another for him; he grunted a consent, which it did not seem to me a rapturous one.

Mr. Metzler also ventured to give me work of this kind. For some months I wrought hard all day, and amused myself with my companions all the evening, selecting my pals from the following classes: small actors, showmen, pedestrians, and clever, discontented mechanics; one lot I never would have at any price, and that was the stupid ones, that could only booze and could not tell me anything I did not know about pleasure, business, and life.

This was a bright existence: so it came to a full stop.

At one and the same time Miss Paley came home, and the fiddle-trade took one of those chills all fancy trades are subject to.

No work — no lodging without paying for it — no wherewithal.

CHAPTER II.

John Beard, a friend of mine, was a painter and grainer. His art was to imitate oak, maple, walnut, satin-wood, etc., upon vulgar deal, beech, or what not.

This business works thus: first, a coat of oil-color is put on with a brush, and this color imitates what may be called the background of the wood that is aimed at: on this oil-background the champ, the fibre, the grain, and figure, and all the incidents of the superior wood, are imitated by various manœuvres in water-colors; or rather in beer-colors, for beer is the approved medium. A coat of varnish over all gives a look of unity to the work.

Beard was out of employ; so was I; bitter against London; so was I. He sounded me about trying the country, and I agreed; and this was the first step of my many travels.

We started the next day; he with his brushes and a few colors and one or two thin panels, painted by way of advertisement; and I with hope, inexperience, and threepence. On the road we spent this and his fivepence, and entered the town of Brentford towards nightfall as empty as drums, and as hungry as wolves.

What was to be done? After a long discussion we agreed to go to the mayor of the town and tell him our case, and offer to paint his street-door in the morning, if he would save our lives for the night.

We went to the mayor; luckily for us, he had risen from nothing, as we were going to do; and so he knew

exactly what we meant when we looked up in his face and laid our hands on our sausage-grinders. He gave us eighteen-pence and an order on a lodging-house, and put bounds to our gratitude by making us promise to let his street-door alone; we thanked him from our hearts, supped, and went to bed, and agreed the country (as we two cockneys called Brentford) was chock-full of good fellows.

The next day up early in the morning, and away to Hounslow; here Beard sought work all through the town: and just when we were in despair he got one door. We dined and slept on this door, but we could not sup off it: we had twopence over though for the morning, and walked on a penny-roll each to Maidenhead.

Here, as we entered the town, we passed a little house with the door painted oak, and a brass plate announcing a plumber, and glazier, and house-painter. Beard pulled up before this door in sorrowful contempt. "Now look here, John," says he, "here is a fellow living among the woods, and you would swear he never saw an oak plank in his life, to look at his work."

Before so very long we came to another specimen; this was maple, and farther from nature than a lawyer from heaven, as the saying is. "There, that will do," says Beard. "I'll tell you what it is, we must try a different move; it is no use looking for work; folks will only employ their own tradesmen; we must teach the professors of the art at so much a panel."

"Will they stomach that?" said I.

"I think they will, as we are strangers and from London. You go and see whether there is a fiddle to be doctored in the town, and meet me again in the market-place at twelve o'clock."

I did meet him, and forlorn enough I was; my trade

had broke down in Maidenhead; not a job of any sort.

"Come to the public-house!" was his first word: that sounded well, I thought.

We sat down to bread and cheese and beer, and he told his tale.

It seems he went into a shop, told the master he was a painter and grainer from a great establishment in London, and was in the habit of travelling and instructing provincial artists in the business. The man was a pompous sort of a customer, and told Beard he knew the business as well as he did, better belike.

Beard answered, "Then you are the only one here that does; for I've been all through the town, and anything wider from the mark than their oak and maple I never saw." Then he quietly took down his panels and spread them out, and looking out sharp he noticed a sudden change come over the man's face.

"Well," says the man, "we reckon ourselves pretty good at it in this town. However, I shouldn't mind seeing how you London chaps do it. What do you charge for a specimen?"

"My charge is two shillings a panel. What wood should you like to gain a notion of?" said Beard, as dry as a chip.

"Well — satin-wood."

Beard painted a panel of satin-wood before his eyes; and of course it was done with great ease, and on a better system than had reached Maidenhead up to that time. "Now," says Beard, "I must go to dinner."

"Well, come back again, my lad," says the man, "and we will go in for something else." So Beard took his two shillings and met me as aforesaid.

After dinner he asked for a private room. "A private room," said I; "hadn't you better order our horse and gig out, and go and call on the rector?"

"None of your chaff," says he.

When we got into the room, he opened the business.

"Your trade is no good; you must take to mine."

"What, teach painters how to paint, when I don't know a stroke myself!"

"Why not? You've only got it to learn: they have got to unlearn all they know; that is the only long process about it. I'll teach you in five minutes," says he; "look here." He then imitated oak before me, and made me do it. He corrected my first attempt: the second satisfied him; we then went on to maple, and so through all the woods he could mimic. He then returned to his customer, and I hunted in another part of the town; and before nightfall I actually gave three lessons to two professors: it is amazing but true, that I, who had been learning ten minutes, taught men who had been all their lives at it — in the country.

One was so pleased with his tutor, that he gave me a pint of beer besides my fee. I thought he was poking fun when he first offered it me.

Beard and I met again triumphant: we had a rousing supper and a good bed, and the next day started for Henley, where we both did a small stroke of business; and on to Reading for the night.

Our goal was Bristol. Beard had friends there. But as we zigzagged for the sake of the towns, we were three weeks walking to that city; but we reached it at last, having disseminated the science of graining in many cities, and got good clothes and money in return.

At Bristol we parted. He found regular employment the first day, and I visited the fiddle-shops and offered my services. At most I was refused; at one or two I got trifling jobs; but at last I went to the right one. The master agreed with me for piece-work on a large scale, and the terms were such that by working quick

and very steady, I could make about twenty-five shillings a week. At this I kept two years, and might have longer, no doubt — but my employer's niece came to live with him.

She was a woman: and my theory being in full career at this date, mutual ardor followed, and I asked her hand of her uncle, and instead of that he gave me what the Turkish ladies get for the same offence — the sack. Off to London again, and the money I had saved by my industry just landed me in the Seven Dials and sixpence over.

I went to Paley, crestfallen as usual. He heard my story, complimented me on my energy, industry, and talent, regretted the existence of woman, and inveighed against her character and results.

We went that evening to private theatricals in Berwick Street, and there I fell in with an acquaintance in the firework line; on hearing my case, he told me I had just fallen from the skies in time, his employer wanted a fresh hand.

The very next day behold me grinding and sifting and ramming powder at Somers Town, and at it ten months.

My evenings, when I was not undoing my own work to show its brilliancy, were often spent in private theatricals.

I hear a row made just now about a dramatic school. "We have no dramatic schools," is the cry. Well, in the day I speak of there were several; why, I belonged to two. We never brought to light an actor; but we succeeded so far as to ruin more than one lad who had brains enough to make a tradesman, till we heated those brains and they boiled all away.

The way we destroyed youth was this; of course nobody would pay a shilling at the door to see us running wild among Shakespeare's lines like pigs broken into

a garden: so the expenses fell upon the actors; and they paid according to the value of the part each played. Richard the Third cost a puppy two pounds; Richmond, fifteen shillings; and so on, so that with us, as in the big world, dignity went by wealth, not merit. I remember this made me sore at the time; still there are two sides to everything: they say poverty urges men to crime; mine saved me from it. If I could have afforded, I would have murdered one or two characters that have lived with good reputation from Queen Bess to Queen Victoria; but as I couldn't afford it, others that could did it for me.

Well, in return for his cash, Richard or Hamlet or Othello commanded tickets in proportion; for the tickets are only gratuitous to the spectators.

Consequently at night each important actor played not only to a most merciful audience, but a large band of devoted friendly spirits in it, who came not to judge him, but express to carry him through triumphant, like an election. Now, when a vain, ignorant chap hears a lot of hands clapping, he has not the sense to say to himself "paid for!" No, it is applause, and applause stamps his own secret opinion of himself: he was off his balance before, and now he tumbles heel over tip into the notion that he is a genius; throws his commercial prospects after the two pounds that went in Richard or Beverley, and crosses Waterloo Bridge spouting, —

> "A fico for the shop and poplins base!
> Counter, avaunt! I on his southern bank
> Will fire the Thames!"

Noodle thus singing goes over the water. But they won't have him at the Surrey or the Vic.: so he takes to the country: and, while his money lasts, and he can pay the mismanager of a small theatre, he gets leave to

play with Richard and Hamlet. But when the money is gone and he wants to be paid for Richard & Co., they laugh at him, and put him in his right place, and that is a utility, and perhaps ends a "super.;" when, if he had not been a coxcomb, he might have sold ribbon like a man to his dying day.

We, and our dramatic schools, ruined more than one or two of this sort by means of his vanity in my young days.

My poverty saved me. The conceit was here in vast abundance, but not the funds to intoxicate myself with such choice liquors as Hamlet & Co. Nothing above old Gobbo (five shillings) ever fell to my lot and by my talent.

When I had made and let off fireworks for a few months, I thought I could make more as a rocket-master, than a rocket-man. I had saved a pound or two. Most of my friends dissuaded me from the attempt; but Paley said, "Let him alone now — don't keep him down — he is born to rise. I'll risk a pound on him." So, by dint of several small loans, I got the materials and made a set of fireworks myself, and agreed with the keeper of some tea-gardens at Hampstead for the spot.

At the appointed time, attended by a trusty band of friends, I put them up: and, when I had taken a tolerable sum at the door, I let them all off.

But they did not all profit by the permission. Some went, but others whose supposed destination was the sky, soared about as high as a house, then returned and forgot their wild nature, and performed the office of our household fires upon the clothes of my visitors; and some faithful spirits, like old domestics, would not leave their master at any price: would not take their discharge. Then there was a row, and I should have been mauled, but my guards rallied round me and brought me off with

whole bones, and marched back to London with me, quizzing me and drinking at my expense. The publican refused to give me my promised fee, and my loss by ambition was twenty-eight shillings, and my reputation — if you would call that a loss.

Was not I quizzed up and down the Seven Dials! Paley alone contrived to stand out in my favor. "Nonsense, a first attempt," said he, "they mostly fail: don't you give in for those fools! I'll tell you a story. There was a chap in prison — I forget his name: he lived in the old times a few hundred years ago, I can't justly say how many: he had failed — at something or other — I don't know how many times — and there he was. Well, Jack, one day he notices a spider climbing up a thundering great slippery stone in the wall. She got a little way — then down she fell — up again and tries it on again — down again. Ah, says the man, you will never do it. But the spider was game — she got six falls, but, by George! the seventh trial she got up. So the gentleman says, 'A man ought to have as much heart as a spider: I won't give in till the seventh trial.' Bless you, long before the seventh he carried all before him, and got to be king of England — or something."

"King of England!" said I, "that was a move upwards out of the stone jug."

"Well," said Paley the hopeful, "you can't be king of England; but you may be the fire-king, he! he! if you are true to powder. How much money do you want to try again?"

I was nettled at my failure, and fired by Paley and his spider, I scraped together a few pounds once more, and advertised a display of fireworks for a certain Monday night.

On the Sunday afternoon Paley and I happened to walk on the Hampstead Road, and near the Adam and

Eve we fell in with an announcement of fireworks. On the bill appeared in enormous letters the following:—

"No connection with the disgraceful exhibition that took place last Friday week!"

Paley was in a towering passion. "Look here, John," says he, "but never you mind—it won't be here long, for I'll tear it down in about half a moment."

"No, you must not do that," said I, a little nervous.

"Why not, you poor-spirited muff?" shouts the little fellow—"let me alone—let me get at it—what are you holding me for?"

"No! no! no! well then"—

"Well then, what?"

"Well then, it is mine."

"What is yours?"

"That advertisement."

"How can it be yours when it insults you?"

"Oh! business before vanity."

"Well, I am blest! Here's a go—look here now," and he began to split his sides laughing; but all of a sudden he turned awful grave; "you will rise, my lad: this is a genuine talent: they might as well try to keep a balloon down." In short, my friend, who was as honest as the day in his own sayings and doings, admired this bit of rascality in me and augured the happiest results.

That district of London which is called the Seven Dials was now divided into two great parties; one augured for me a brilliant success next day: the other a dead failure. The latter party numbered many names unknown to fame: the former consisted of Paley. I was neuter, distrusting, not my merits, but what I called my luck.

On Monday afternoon I was busy putting out the fireworks, nailing them to their posts, etc. Towards even

ing it began to rain so heavily that they had to be taken in, and the whole thing given up: it was postponed to Thursday.

On Thursday night we had a good assembly: the sum taken at the doors exceeded my expectation. I had my misgivings on account of the rain that had fallen on my kickshaws Monday evening; so I began with those articles I had taken in first out of the rain; they went off splendidly, and my personal friends were astounded; but soon my poverty began to tell: instead of having many hands to save the fireworks from wet, I had been alone, and of course much time had been lost in getting them under cover; we began now to get along the damp lot, and science was lost in chance: some would and some wouldn't, and the people began to goose me.

A rocket or two that fizzed themselves out without rising a foot inflamed their angry passions: so I announced two fiery pigeons.

The fiery pigeon is a pretty firework enough: it is of the nature of a rocket, but being on a string it travels backwards and forwards between two termini, to which the string is fixed: when there are two strings and two pigeons, the fiery wings race one another across the ground, and charm the gazing throng. One of my termini was a tree at the extremity of the gardens; up this tree I mounted in my shirt-sleeves with my birds: the people surrounded the tree and were dead silent: I could see their final verdict, and my fate hung on these pigeons; I placed them and with a beating heart lighted their matches. To my horror one did not move. I might as well have tried to explode green sticks. The other started and went off with great resolution and accompanying cheers towards the opposite side. But midway it suddenly stopped and the cheers with it: it did not come to an end all at once; but the fire oozed gradu-

ally out of it like water — a howl of derision was hurled up into the tree at me: but, worse than that, looking down I saw in the moonlight a hundred stern faces with eyes like red-hot emeralds, in which I read my fate: they were waiting for me to come down, like terriers for a rat in a trap, and I felt by the look of them that they would kill me or near it; I crept along a bough the end of which cleared the wall and overhung the road: I determined to break my neck sooner than fall into the hands of an insulted public. An impatient orange whizzed by my ear, and an apple knocked my hat out of the premises. I crouched and clung — luckily I was on an ash-bough, long, tapering and tough; it bent with me like a rainbow. A stick or two now whizzed past my ear, and it began to hail fruit. I held on like grim death till the road was within six feet of me, and then dropped and ran off home, like a dog with a kettle at his tail; meantime a rush was made to the gate to cut me off; but it was too late: the garden meandered, and my executioners, when they got to the outside, saw nothing but a flitting spectre: me in my shirt-sleeves making for the Seven Dials.

Mr. and Miss Paley were seated by their fire, and, as I afterwards learned, Paley was recommending her to me for a husband, and explaining to her at some length, why I was sure to rise in the world, when a figure in shirt-sleeves begrimed with powder, and no hat, burst into the room, and shrank without a word into the corner by the fire.

Miss Paley looked up, and then began to look down and snigger. Her father stared at me, and after awhile I could see him set his teeth and nerve his obstinate old heart for the coming struggle.

"Well, how did it happen?" said he, at last. "Where is your coat?"

I told him the whole story.

Miss Paley had her hand to her mouth all the time, afraid to give vent to the feelings proper to the occasion because of her father.

"Now answer me one question. Have you got their money?" says Paley.

"Yes, I have got their money for that matter."

"Well then, what need you care? You are all right; and if they had gone off they would have been all over by now just the same: he wants his supper, Lucy — give us something hot to make us forget our squibs and crackers, or we shall die of a broken heart, all of us poor fainting souls — such a calamity! The rain wetted them through — that is all — you couldn't fight against the elements, could you? Lay the cloth, girl."

"But, Mr. Paley," whined I, "they have got my new coat; and you may be sure they have torn it limb from jacket."

"Have they?" cried he, "well, that is a comfort any way. Your new coat, eh? Lucy, it hung on the boy's back like an old sack. Do you see this bit of cloth? I shall make you a Sunday coat with this, and then you'll sell. Fetch a quart to-night, girl, instead of a pint: the fire-king is going to do us the honor. Che-er up!"

CHAPTER III.

It was now time that Miss Paley should suffer the penalty of her sex. She was a comely, good-humored, and sensible girl. We used often to walk out together on Sundays, and very friendly we were. I used to tell her she was the flower of her sex, and she used to laugh at that. One Sunday I spoke more plainly, and laid my

heart, my thirteen shillings, the fruit of my last imposture on the public, and my various arts, at her feet, out walking.

A proposal of this sort, if I may trust the stories I read, produces thrilling effects; if agreeable, the ladies either refuse in order to torment themselves, which act of virtue justifies them, they think, in tormenting the man they love, or else they show their rapturous assent by bursting out crying or by fainting away, or their lips turning cold, and other signs proper to a disordered stomach; if it is to be "no," they are almost as much cut up about it, and say no like yes, which has the happy result of leaving him hope and prolonging his pain. Miss Paley did quite different. She blushed a little, and smiled archly, and said, "Now, John, you and I are good friends, and I like you very much; and I will walk with you and laugh with you as much as you like; but I have been engaged these two years to Charles Hook, and I love him, John."

"Do you, Lucy?"

"Yes," under her breath a bit.

"Oh!"

"So if we are to be friends you must not put that question to me again, John. What do you say? we are to be friends, are we not?" And she put out her hand.

"Yes, Lucy."

"And, John, you need not go for to tell my father. What is the use vexing him? He has got a notion; but it will pass away in time."

I consented, of course, and Lucy and I were friends.

Mr. Paley somehow suspected which way his daughter's heart turned, and not long after a neighbor told me he heard him quizzing her unmerciful for her bad judgment. As for harshness or tyranny, that was not under

his skin, as the saying is. He wound up with telling her that John was a man safe to rise.

"I hope he may, father, I am sure," says Lucy.

"Well, and can't you see he is the man for you?"

"No, father, I can't see that; he, he!"

CHAPTER IV.

I DON'T think I have been penniless not a dozen times in my life. When I get down to twopence or threepence, which is very frequent indeed, something is apt to turn up and raise me to silver once more, and there I stick. But about this time I lay out of work a long time, and was reduced to the lowest ebb. In this condition a friend of mine took me to the "Harp" in Little Russell Street, to meet Mr. Webb, the manager of a strolling company. Mr. Webb was beating London for recruits to complete his company which lay at Bishops Stortford, but which, owing to desertions, was not numerous enough to massacre five-act plays. I instantly offered to go as carpenter and scene-shifter: to this he demurred — he was provided with them already — he wanted actors; to this I objected, not that I cared to what sort of work I turned my hand, but in these companies a carpenter is paid for his day's work according to his agreement, but the actors are remunerated by a share in the night's profits, and the profits are often written in the following figures: £0. 0*s*. 0*d*.

However, Mr. Webb was firm, he had no carpenter's place to offer me, so I was obliged to lower my pretensions. I agreed then to be an actor. I was cast as Father Philip in the "Iron Chest" next evening. My share of the profits to be one-eighth. I borrowed a

shilling, and my friend Johnstone and I walked all the way to Bishops Stortford. We played the "Iron Chest," and divided the profits. Hitherto I had been in the mechanical arts. This was my first step into the fine ones. Father Philip's share of the "Chest" was two and a half pence.

Now this might be a just remuneration for the performance; I almost think it was: but it left the walk, thirty miles, not accounted for.

The next night I was cast in "Jerry Sneak." I had no objection to the part; only, under existing circumstances, the place to play it seemed to me to be the road to London, not the boards of Bishops Stortford; so I sneaked off towards the Seven Dials. Johnstone, though cast for the hero, was of Jerry's mind, and sneaked away along with him.

We had made but twelve miles when the manager and a constable came up with us. Those were peremptory days; they offered us our choice of the fine arts again, or prison. After a natural hesitation we chose the arts, and were driven back to them like sheep. Night's profits, fivepence. In the morning the whole company dissolved away like a snowball. Johnstone and I had a meagre breakfast and walked on it twenty-six miles. He was a stout fellow — shone in brigands — he encouraged and helped me along; but at last I could go no farther.

My slighter frame was quite worn out with hunger and fatigue. "Leave me," I said; "perhaps some charitable hand will aid me, and if not, why then I shall die: and I don't care if I do; for I have lost all hope."

"Nonsense," cried the fine fellow. "I'll carry you home on my back sooner than leave you — die? That is a word a man should never say. Come, courage, only four miles more."

No. I could not move from the spot. I was what I believe seldom really happens to any man, dead beat, body and soul.

I sank down on a heap of stones. Johnstone sat down beside me.

The sun was just setting. It was a bad lookout. Starving people to lie out on stones all night. A man can stand cold, and he can fight with hunger: but put those two together, and life is soon exhausted.

At last a rumble was heard, and presently an empty coal-wagon came up. A coal-heaver sat on the shaft, and another walked by the side. Johnstone went to meet them — they stopped — I saw him pointing to me, and talking earnestly.

The men came up to me: they took hold of me and shot me into the cart like a hundred-weight of coal. "Why, he is starving with cold," said one of them, and he flung half a dozen empty sacks over me, and on we went. At the first public the wagon stopped, and soon one of my new friends with a cheerful voice brought a pewter flagon of porter to me: I sipped it. "Don't be afraid of it," cried he, "down with it; it is meat and drink, that is." And indeed so I found it. It was a heavenly solid liquid to me: it was "stout" by name, and "stout" by nature.

These good fellows, whom men do right to call black diamonds, carried me safe into the Strand, and thence, being now quite my own man again, I reached the Seven Dials. Paley was in bed. He came down directly in his nightgown, and lighted a fire and pulled a piece of cold beef out of the cupboard, and cheered me as usual, but in a fatherly way this time; and of course at my age I was soon all right again, and going to take the world by storm to-morrow morning. He left me for awhile and went up-stairs: presently he came down again.

"Your bed is ready, John."

"Why," said I, "you have not three rooms."

"Lucy is on a visit," said he; then he paused. "Stop a bit, I'll warm your bed."

He took me up-stairs to my old room and warmed the bed. I, like a thoughtless young fool, rolled into it, half gone with sleep, and never woke till ten next morning.

I don't know what the reader will think of me when I tell him that the old man had turned Lucy out of her room into his own, and sat all night by the fire that I might lie soft after my troubles. Ah — he was a bit of steel. And have you left me, and can I share no more sorrow or joy with you in this world! Eh, dear, it makes me misty to think of the old man — after all these years.

CHAPTER V.

I USED often to repair and doctor a violin for a gent whom I shall call Chaplin: he played in the orchestra of the Adelphi Theatre. Mr. Chaplin was not only a customer but a friend; he saw how badly off I was, and had a great desire to serve me: now it so happened that Mr. Yates the manager was going to give an entertainment he called his "At Homes," and this took but a small orchestra, of which Mr. Chaplin was to be the leader: so he was allowed to engage the other instruments; and he actually proposed to me to be a second violin.

I stared at him. "How can I do that?"

"Why, I often hear you try a violin."

"Yes, and I always play the same notes, perhaps you have observed that too?"

"I notice it is always a slow movement — eh? Never mind, this is the only thing I can think of to serve you — you must strum out something — it will be a good thing for you, you know."

"Well," said I, "if Mr. Yates will promise to sing nothing faster than 'Je-ru-sa-lem my hap-py home,' I'll accompany him."

No — he would not be laughed out of it. He was determined to put money in my pocket, and would take no denial. "Next Monday you will have the goodness to meet me at the theatre at six o'clock with your fiddle. Play how you like, play inaudible for what I care, but play and draw your weekly salary you must and shall."

"Play inaudible." These words sunk to the very bottom of me. "Play inaudible."

I fell into a brown study; it lasted three days and three nights. Finally, to my good patron's great content, I consented to come up to the scratch; and Monday night I had the hardihood to present myself in the music-room of the Adelphi. My violin was a ringing one, I tuned up the loudest of them all, and Mr. Chaplin's eye rested on me with an approving glance.

Time was called. We played an overture, and accompanied Mr. Yates in his recitatives and songs, and performed pieces and airs between the acts, etc. The leader's eye often fell on me, and, when it did, he saw the most conscientious workman of the crew ploughing every note with singular care and diligence.

In this same little orchestra was James Bates, another favorite of Mr. Chaplin, and an experienced fiddler.

This young man was a great chum of mine. He was a fine honest young fellow, but of rather a saturnine temper. He was not movable to mirth at any price. He would play without a smile to a new pantomime — stuck there all night like Solomon cut in black marble

with a white choker, as solemn as a tomb, with hundreds laughing all around.

Once or twice while we were at work I saw Mr. Chaplin look at Bates, knowing we two were chums, and whenever he did it seems the young one bit his lips and turned as red as a beetroot. After the lights were out Mr. Chaplin congratulated me before Bates. "There, you see, it is not so very hard. Why, hang me, if you did not saw away as well as the best!" At these words Bates gave a sort of yell, and ran home. Mr. Chaplin looked after him with surprise. "There's some devil's delight up between you two," said he. "I shall find it out."

Next night in the tuning-room my fiddle was so resinant it attracted attention, and one or two asked leave to try it. "Why not?" said I.

During work Mr. Chaplin had one eye on me, and one on Bates, and caught the perspiration running down my face, and him simpering for the first time in the history of the Adelphi.

"What has come over Jem Bates?" said Mr. Chaplin to me. "The lad is all changed. You have put some of your late gunpowder into him; there is something up between you two." After the play he got us together, and he looked Bates in the face and just said to him, "Eh?"

At this wholesale interrogatory Bates laid hold of himself tight. "No, Mr. Chaplin, sir; I can't. It will kill me when it does come out of me."

"When what comes out? You young rascals, if you don't both of you tell me, I'll break my fiddle over Bates, and Jack shall mend it free of expense gratis for nothing. That is how I'll serve mutineers. Come, out with it."

"Tell him, John," said Bates, demurely.

"No," said I, "tell him yourself if you think it will gratify him." I had my doubts.

"Well," said Bates, "it is ungrateful to keep you out of it, sir — so — he! he! — I'll tell you, sir — this second violin has two bows in his violin-case."

"Well, stupid, what is commoner than that for a fiddler?"

"But this is not a fiddler," squeaked Bates, "he's only a bower. Oh, oh, oh!"

"Only a bower?"

"No! Oh! Oh! I shall die, it will kill me." I gave a sort of ghastly grin myself.

"You unconscionable scoundrels!" shouted Mr. Chaplin. "There, look at this Bates, he is at it again, a fellow that the very clown could never raise a laugh out of, and now I see him all night smirking and grinning and looking down like a jackdaw that has got his claw on a thimble. If you don't speak out, I'll knock your two tormenting skulls together till they roll off down the gutter side by side, chuckling and giggling all day and all night." At this direful, mysterious threat, Bates composed himself. "The power is all out of my body, sir, so now I can tell you."

He then in faint tones gave this explanation, which my guilty looks confirmed. "One of his bows is resined, sir; that one is the tuner. I don't know whether you have observed, but he tunes rather louder than any two of *us*. Oh, dear, it is coming again."

"Don't be a fool now. Yes, I have noticed that."

"The other bow, Mr. Chaplin, sir, the other bow is soaped, well soaped, sir, for orchestral use. Ugh. Ugh."

"Oh, the varmint!"

Bates continued. "You take a look at him, you see him fingering and bowing like mad, but as for sound, you know what a greasy bow is?"

"Of course I do. I don't wonder at your laughing—ha, ha, ha! Oh, the thief! when I think of his diligent face and him shaking his right wrist like Viotti."

"Mind your pockets though, he knows too much."

It was now my turn to speak. "I am glad you like the idea, sir," said I, "for it comes from you."

"How can you say that?"

"What did you tell me to do?"

"I didn't tell you to do that. I don't remember what I told him, Bates, not to the letter."

"Told me to play inaudible!"

"Well, I never," said Mr. Chaplin.

"Those were your words, sir; they did not fall to the ground, you see."

My position in this orchestra and the situations that arose out of it were meat and drink to my two friends. With the gentry, whose lives are a succession of amusements, a joke soon wears out, no doubt; but we poor fellows can't let one go cheap. How do we know how long it may be before Heaven sends us another? A joke falling among us is like a rat in a kennel of terriers.

At intricate passages the first violin used to look at the tenor and then at me, and wink, and they both swelled with innocent enjoyment, till at last unknown powers of gayety budded in Bates: with quizzing his friend he learned to take a jest; so much so that one night, Mr. Yates being funnier than usual if possible, a single horse-laugh suddenly exploded among the fiddles. This was Bates gone off all in a moment after his trigger being pulled so many years to no purpose. Mr. Yates looked down with gratified surprise.

"Halloo! Brains got in the orchestra; after that anything!"

But do you think it was fun to me, all this? I declare

I suffered the torture of the — you know what. I never felt safe a moment. I had placed myself next to an old fiddler who was deaf, but he somehow smelt at times that I was shirking, and then he used to cry, "Pull out, pull out, you don't pull out."

"How can you say so?" I used to reply, and then saw away like mad: when, so connected are the senses of sight and hearing apparently, the old fellow used to smile and be at peace. He saw me pull, and so he heard me pull out. Then sometimes friends of the other performers would be in the orchestra, and peep over me and say civil things, and I wish them further, civilities and all. But it is a fact that for two months I gesticulated in that orchestra without a soul finding out that I was not suiting the note to the action.

At last we broke up, to my great relief, but I did not leave the theatre. Mr. Widger, Mr. Yates's dresser, got me a place behind the scenes at nine shillings per week.

I used to dress Mr. Reeve and run for his brandies and waters, which kept me on the trot, and do odd jobs.

But I was now to make the acquaintance that colored all my life, or the cream of it. My time was come to move in a wider circle of men and things, and really to do what so many fancy they have done — to see the world.

In the month of April, 1828, Mr. Yates, theatrical manager, found his nightly receipts fall below his nightly expenses. In this situation a manager falls upon one of two things; a spectacle or a star. Mr. Yates preferred the latter, and went over to Paris and engaged Mademoiselle Djek.

Mademoiselle Djek was an elephant of great size, and unparalleled sagacity. She had been for some time performing in a play at Franconi's, and created a great sensation in Paris.

Of her previous history little is known. But she was first landed from the East in England, and was shown about merely as an elephant by her proprietor, an Italian called Polito. The Frenchmen first found out her talent. Her present owner was a M. Huguet, and with him Mr. Yates treated. She joined the Adelphi company at a salary of forty pounds a week and her grub.

There was great expectation in the theatre for some days; the play in which she was to perform "The Elephant of the King of Siam," was cast and rehearsed several times; a wooden house was built for her at the back of the stage, and one fine afternoon sure enough she arrived with all her train, one or two of each nation; viz., her owner, M. Huguet (French), her principal keeper, Tom Elliot (English), her subordinates, Bernard (French), and an Italian nicknamed Pippin. She arrived at the stage-door in Maiden Lane, and soon after the messenger was sent to Mr. Yates's house.

"Elephant's come, sir."

"Well, let them put her in the place built for her, and I'll come and see her."

"They can't do that, sir."

"Why not?"

"La bless you, sir, she might get her foot into the theatre: but how is her body to come through the stage-door? why, she is almost as big as the house."

Down comes Mr. Yates, and there was the elephant standing all across Maiden Lane — all traffic interrupted except what could pass under her belly — and such a crowd, my eye!

Mr. Yates put his hands in his pockets and took a quiet look at the state of affairs.

"You must make a hole in the wall," said he.

Pickaxes went to work and made a hole or rather a frightful chasm in the theatre, and when it looked about

two-thirds her size, Elliot said, "Stop!" He then gave her a sharp order, and the first specimen we saw of her cleverness was her doubling herself together and creeping in through that hole, bending her fore-knees, and afterwards rising and dragging her hind-legs horizontally, and so she disappeared like an enormous mole burrowing into the theatre.

Mademoiselle Djek's bills were posted all over the town, and everything done to make her take, and on the following Tuesday the theatre was pretty well filled by the public; the manager also took care to have a strong party in the pit. In short, she was nursed as other stars are upon their *début*.

Night came: all was anxiety behind the lights and expectation in front.

The green curtain drew up, and Mr. Yates walked on in black dress-coat and white kid gloves, like a private gentleman just landed out of a bandbox at the Queen's ball. He was the boy to talk to the public: soft sawder, dignified reproach, friendly intercourse, he had them all at his fingers' ends. This time it was the easy tone of refined conversation upon the intelligent creature he was privileged to introduce to them. I remember his discourse as well as if it was yesterday.

"The elephant," said Mr. Yates, "is a marvel of nature. We are now to have the pleasure of showing her to you as taking her place in art." Then he praised the wisdom and beneficence of creation. "Among the small animals, such as cats and men, there is to be found such a thing as spite; treachery ditto, and love of mischief, and even cruelty at odd times: but here is a creature with the power to pull down our houses about our ears like Samson, but a heart that will not let her hurt a fly. Properly to appreciate her moral character consider what a thing power is, see how it tries us, how

often in history it has turned men to demons. The elephant," added he, "is the friend of man by choice, not by necessity or instinct: it is born as wild as a lion or buffalo, but the moment an opportunity arrives, its kindred intelligence allies it to man, its only superior or equal in reasoning power. We are about," said Mr. Yates, "to present a play in which an elephant will act a part, and yet act but herself, for the intelligence and affectionate disposition she will display on these boards as an actress are merely her own private and domestic qualities. Not every one of us actors, gentlemen, can say as much."

Then there was a laugh in which Mr. Yates joined. In short, Mr. Yates, who could play upon the public ear better than some fiddles (I name no names), made his *débutante* popular before ever she stepped upon the scene. He then bowed with intense gratitude to the audience for the attention they had honored him with, retired to the prompter's side, and, as he reached it, the act drop flew up and the play began: it commenced on two legs: the elephant did not come on until the second scene of the act.

The drama was a good specimen of its kind: it was a story of some interest and length and variety, and the writer had been sharp enough not to make the elephant too common in it; she came on only three or four times, and always at a nick of time, and to do good business —as theatricals say, i.e., for some important purpose in the story.

A king of Siam had lately died, and the elephant was seen taking her part in the funeral obsequies. She deposited his sceptre, etc., in the tomb of his fathers, and was seen no more in that act. The rightful heir to this throne was a young prince to whom the elephant belonged. An usurper opposed him, and a battle took

place, the rightful heir was worsted and taken prisoner, the usurper condemned him to be thrown into the sea. In the next act, this sentence was being executed: four men were discovered passing through a wood carrying no end of a box. Suddenly a terrific roar was heard, the men put down the box rather more carefully than they would in real life, and fled, and the elephant walked on to the scene alone like any other actress. She smelt about the box, and presently tore it open with her proboscis, and there was her master, the rightful heir, but in a sad exhausted state. When the good soul sees this what does she do but walk to the other side and tear down the bough of a fruit-tree and hand it to the sufferer: he sucked it, and it had the effect of stout on him — it made a man of him, and they marched away together, the elephant trumpeting to show her satisfaction.

In the next act the rightful heir's friends were discovered behind the bars of a prison at a height from the ground. The order for their execution arrived, and they were down upon their luck terribly. In marched the elephant, tore out the iron bars, and squeezed herself against the wall half-squatting in the shape of a triangle: so then the prisoners glided down her to the ground slantindicular one after another.

When the civil war had lasted long enough to sicken both sides, and enough widows and orphans had been made, the Siamese began to ask themselves, "But what is it all about?" The next thing was, they said, "What asses we have been! Was there no other way of deciding between two men but bleeding the whole tribe?" Then they reflected and said, "We are asses, that is clear; but we hear there is one animal in the nation that is not an ass: why of course, then, she is the one to decide our dispute." Accordingly a grand assembly was held,

the rival claimants were compelled to attend, and the elephant was led in. Then the high priest, or some such article, having first implored Heaven to speak through the quadruped, bade her decide according to justice. No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the elephant stretched out her proboscis, seized a little crown that glittered on the usurper's head, and, waving it gracefully in the air, deposited it gently and carefully on the brows of the rightful heir. So then there was a rush made on the wrongful heir, he was taken out guarded and warned off the premises: the rightful heir mounted the throne and grinned and bowed all round, the elephant trumpeted, Siam hurrahed, Djek's party in the house echoed the sound, and down came the curtain in thunders of applause. Though the curtain was down, the applause continued most vehemently, and after awhile a cry arose at the back of the pit, "Elephant, elephant!" That part of the audience that had paid at the door laughed at this, but their laughter turned to curiosity when in answer to the cry the curtain was raised, and the stage discovered empty. Curiosity in turn gave way to surprise; for the elephant walked on from the third grooves alone, and came slap down to the float. At this, the astonished public literally roared at her. But how can I describe the effect, the amazement, when, in return for the compliment, the *débutante* slowly bent her knees and courtesied twice to the British public, and then retired backwards as the curtain once more fell? People looked at one another and seemed to need to read in their neighbor's eyes whether such a thing was real; and then followed that buzz which tells the knowing ones behind the curtain that the nail has gone home, that the theatre will be crammed to the ceiling to-morrow night, and perhaps for eighty nights after.

Mr. Yates fed Mademoiselle Djek with his own hand that night, crying, "Oh, you duck!"

The fortunes of the Adelphi rose from that hour — full houses without intermission.

Mr. Yates shortened his introductory address, and used to make it a brief, neat, and I think elegant eulogy of her gentleness and affectionate disposition; her talent "the public are here to judge for themselves," said Mr. Yates, and exit P. S.

A theatre is a little world; and Djek soon became the hero of ours. Everybody must have a passing peep at the star that was keeping the theatre open all summer, and providing bread for a score or two of families connected with it. Of course a mind like mine was not among the least inquisitive. But her head keeper Tom Elliot, a surly fellow, repulsed our attempts to scrape acquaintance. "Mind your business, and I'll mind mine," was his chant. He seemed to be wonderfully jealous of her. He could not forbid Mr. Yates to visit her, as he did us, but he always insisted on being one of the party even then. He puzzled us: but the strongest impression he gave us was that he was jealous of her; afraid she would get as fond of some others as of him, and so another man might be able to work her, and his own nose lose a joint as the saying is; later on we learned to put a different interpretation on his conduct. Pippin the Italian, and Bernard the Frenchman, used to serve her with straw and water, etc., but it was quite a different thing from Elliot. They were like a fine lady's grooms and running footmen, but Elliot was her body-servant, groom of the bed-chamber, or what not. He used always to sleep in the straw close to her: sometimes, when he was drunk, he would roll in between her legs, and if she had not been more careful of him than any other animal ever was (especially himself), she must

have crushed him to death three nights in the week. Next to Elliot, but a long way below him, M. Huguet seemed her favorite. He used to come into her box and caress her and feed her and make much of her: but she never went on the stage without Elliot in sight, and in point of fact all she did upon our stage was done at a word of command given then and there at the side by this man and no other — going down to the float — courtesying and all.

Being mightily curious to know how he had gained such influence with her, I made several attempts to sound him, but drunk or sober he was equally unfathomable on this point.

I then endeavored to slake my curiosity at No. 2. I made bold to ask M. Huguet how he had won her affections. The Frenchman was as communicative as the native was reserved: he broke plenty of English over me: it came to this, that the strongest feeling of an elephant was gratitude, and that he had worked on this for years; was always kind to her, and seldom approached her without giving her lumps of sugar — carried a pocket full on purpose. This tallied with what I had heard and read of an elephant: still the problem remained, why is she fonder still of this Tom Elliot, whose manner is not ingratiating, and who never speaks to her but in a harsh, severe voice?

She stood my friend any way: a good many new supers were engaged to play with her, and I was set over these, looked out their dresses, and went on with them and her as a slave: nine shillings a week for this was added to my other nine, which I drew for dressing an actor or two of the higher class.

The more I was about her the more I felt that we were not at the bottom of this quadruped, nor even of her bipeds. There were gestures and glances and shrugs always passing to and fro among them.

One day at the rehearsal of a farce there was no Mr. Yates. Somebody inquired loudly for him.

"Hush," says another, "haven't you heard?"

"No."

"You mustn't talk of it out of doors."

"No!"

"Half killed by the elephant this morning."

It seems he was feeding and coaxing her, as he had often done before, when all in a moment she laid hold of him with her trunk, and gave him a squeeze. He lay in bed six weeks with it, and there was nobody to deliver her eulogy at night. Elliot was at the other end of the stage when the accident happened. He heard Mr. Yates cry out, and ran in, and the elephant let Mr. Yates go, the moment she saw him.

We questioned Elliot. We might as well have cross-examined the monument. Then I inquired of M. Huguet what this meant. That gentleman explained to me that Djek had miscalculated her strength, that she wanted to caress so kind a manager, who was always feeding and courting her, and had embraced him too warmly.

The play went on, and the elephant's reputation increased. But her popularity was destined to receive a shock, as far as we little ones behind the curtain were concerned.

One day, while Pippin was spreading her straw, she knocked him down with her trunk, and pressing her tooth against him, bored two frightful holes in his skull, before Elliot could interfere. Pippin was carried to St. George's Hospital, and we began to look in one another's faces.

Pippin's situation was in the market.

One or two declined it. It came down to me. I reflected, and accepted it — another nine shillings, total twenty-seven shillings.

That night two supers turned tail. An actress also, whose name I have forgotten, refused to go on with her. "I was not engaged to play with a brute," said this lady, "and I won't." Others went on as usual, but were not so sweet on it as before. The rightful heir lost all relish for his part, and above all, when his turn came to be preserved from harm by her, I used to hear him crying out of the box to Elliot, "Are you there? are you sure you are there?" and, when she tore open his box, Garrick never acted better than this one used to now; for you see his cue was to exhibit fear and exhaustion, and he did both to the life, because for the last five minutes he had been thinking, "Oh, dear! oh, dear! suppose she should do the foot business on my box, instead of the proboscis business."

These, however, were vain fears: she made no mistake before the public.

Nothing lasts forever in this world, and the time came that she ceased to fill the house. Then Mr. Yates reengaged her for the provinces, and, having agreed with the country managers, sent her down to Bath and Bristol first. He had a good opinion of me, and asked me to go with her and watch his interests. I should not certainly have applied for the place, but it was not easy to say no to Mr. Yates, and I felt I owed him some reparation for the wrong I had done that great artist in accompanying his voice with my gestures.

In short, we started, Djek, Elliot, Bernard, I, and Pippin, on foot (he was just out of St. George's). Messrs. Huguet and Yates rolled in their carriage to meet us at the principal towns where we played.

As we could not afford to make her common, our walking was all night-work, and introduced me to a rough life.

The average of night weather is wetter and windier

than day, and many a vile night we tramped through when wise men were abed; and we never knew for certain where we should pass the night: for it depended on Djek. She was so enormous that half the inns could not find us a place big enough for her. Our first evening stroll was to Bath and Bristol: thence we crossed to Dublin, thence we returned to Plymouth. We walked from Plymouth to Liverpool, playing with good success at all these places. At Liverpool she laid hold of Bernard, and would have settled his hash, but Elliot came between them.

That same afternoon in walks a young gentleman dressed in the height of Parisian fashion, — glossy hat, satin tie, trousers puckered at the haunches, — sprucer than any poor Englishman will be while the world lasts; and who was it but Monsieur Bernard come to take leave. We endeavored to dissuade him: he smiled and shook his head, treated us, flattered us, and showed us his preparations for France.

All that day and the next he sauntered about us, dressed like a gentleman, with his hands in his pockets and an ostentatious neglect of his late affectionate charge. Before he left he invited me to drink something at his expense, and was good enough to say I was what he most regretted leaving.

"Then why go?" said I.

"I will tell you, *mon pauvre garçon*," said Monsieur Bernard. "We old hands have all got our orders to say she is a duck. Ah! you have found that out of yourself. Well, now, as I have done with her, I will tell you a part of her character, for I know her well. Once she injures you she can never forgive you. So long as she has never hurt you, there's a fair chance she never will. I have been about her for years, and she never molested me till yesterday. But — if she once attacks a man,

that man's death-warrant is signed — I can't altogether account for it: but trust my experience it is so. I would have stayed with you all my life if she had not shown me my fate; but not now: *merci!* I have a wife and two children in France. I have saved some money out of her: I return to the bosom of my family: and if Pippin stays with her after the hint she gave him in London, why, you will see the death of Pippin, my lad, *voilà tout*, that is, if you don't go first. *Qu'est que ça te fait à la fin? tu es garçon toi — buvons!*"

The next day he left us, and left me sad for one. The quiet determination with which he acted upon positive experience of her was enough to make a man thoughtful. And then Bernard was the flower of us: he was the drop of mirth and gayety in our iron cup. He was a pure, unadulterated Frenchman, and to be just — where can you find anything so delightful as a Frenchman — of the right sort?

He fluttered home singing

> "Les doux yeux de ma brunet—te,
> Tout—e mignonett—e, tout—e gentillett—e,"

and left us all in black.

God bless you, my merry fellow. I hope you found your children healthy, and your brunette true and your friends alive, and that the world is just to you, and smiles on you, as you do on it, and did on us.

From Liverpool we walked to Glasgow: from Glasgow to Edinburgh: and from Edinburgh, on a cold starry midnight we started for Newcastle.

In this interval of business let me paint you my companions Pippin and Elliot. The reader is entitled to this, for there must have been something out of the common in their looks, since I was within an ace of

being killed along of the Italian's face, and was imprisoned four days through the Englishman's mug.

The Italian whom we know by the nickname of Pippin was a man of immense stature and athletic mould. His face, once seen, would never be forgotten. His skin, almost as swarthy as Othello's, was set off by dazzling ivory teeth, and lighted by two glorious large eyes, black as jet, brilliant as diamonds: the orbs of black lightning gleamed from beneath eyebrows that many a dandy would have bought for mustaches at a high valuation. A nose like a reaping-hook completed him — perch him on a tolerable-sized rock, and there you had a black eagle.

As if this was not enough, Pippin would always wear a conical hat, and had he but stepped upon the stage in "Massaniello" or the like, all the other brigands would have sunk down to rural police by the side of our man. But now comes the absurdity: his inside was not different from his out, it was the exact opposite. You might turn over twenty thousand bullet heads and bolus eyes, before you could find one man so thoroughly harmless as this thundering brigand. He was just a pet, an universal pet, of all the men and women that came near him. He had the disposition of a dove and the heart of a hare. He was a lamb in wolf's clothing.

My next portrait is not so pleasing.

A MAN TURNED BRUTE.

Some ten years before this, a fine, stout young English rustic entered the service of Mademoiselle Djek. He was a model for bone and muscle, and had two cheeks like roses: when he first went to Paris he was looked on as a curiosity there. People used to come to Djek's stable to see her and Elliot, the young English Samson. Just ten years after this young Elliot had got

to be called "old Elliot." His face was not only pale, it was colorless; it was the face of a walking corpse. This came of ten years' brandy and brute. I have often asked people to guess the man's age, and they always guessed sixty, sixty-five, or seventy, oftenest the latter.

He was thirty-five, not a day more.

This man's mind had come down along with his body.

He understood nothing but elephant, he seldom talked, and then nothing but elephant. He was an elephant-man. I will give you an instance which I always thought curious.

An elephant, you may have observed, cannot stand quite still. The great weight of its head causes a nodding movement, which is perpetual when the creature stands erect. Well, this Tom Elliot, when he stood up, used always to have one foot advanced, and his eye half closed, and his head niddle-noddling like an elephant all the time; and with it all such a presence of brute and absence of soul in his mug, enough to give a thoughtful man some very queer ideas about man and beast.

CHAPTER VI.

My office in this trip was merely to contract for the elephant's food at the various places; but I was getting older and shrewder, and more designing than I used to be, and I was quite keen enough to see in this elephant the means of bettering my fortunes if I could but make friends with her. But how to do this? She was like a coquette: strange admirers welcome; but when you had courted her awhile she got tired of you, and then nothing short of your demise satisfied her caprice. Her heart seemed inaccessible, except to this brute Elliot,

and he, drunk or sober, guarded the secret of his fascination by some instinct; for reason he possessed in a very small degree.

I played the spy on quadruped and biped, and I found out the fact, but the reason beat me. I saw that she was more tenderly careful of him than a mother of her child. I saw him roll down stupid drunk under her belly, and I saw her lift first one foot and then the other, and draw them slowly and carefully back, trembling with fear lest she might make a mistake and hurt him.

But why she was a mother to him, and a stepmother to the rest of us, that I could not learn.

One day, between Plymouth and Liverpool, having left Elliot and her together, I happened to return, and I found the elephant alone and in a state of excitement, and looking in I observed some blood upon the straw.

His turn has come at last, was my first notion; but looking round, there was Elliot behind me.

"I was afraid she had tried it on with you," I said.

"Who?"

"The elephant."

Elliot's face was not generally expressive, but the look of silent scorn he gave me at the idea of the elephant attacking him was worth seeing. The brute knew something I did not know and could not find out; and from this one piece of knowledge he looked down upon me with a sort of contempt that set all the Seven Dials' blood on fire.

"I will bottom this," said I, "if I die for it."

My plan now was to feed Djek every day with my own hand, but never to go near her without Elliot at my very side, and in front of the elephant.

This was my first step.

We were now drawing towards Newcastle, and had to

lie at Morpeth; where we arrived late, and found Mr. Yates and M. Huguet, who had come out from Newcastle to meet us; and at this place I determined on a new move which I had long meditated.

Elliot, I reflected, always slept with the elephant. None of the other men had ever done this. Now might there not be some magic in this unbroken familiarity between the two animals?

Accordingly, at Morpeth I pretended there was no bed vacant in the inn, and asked Elliot to let me lie beside him; he grunted an ungracious assent.

Not to overdo it at first, I got Elliot between me and Djek, so that if she was offended at my intrusion, she must pass over her darling to resent it; we had tramped a good many miles, and were soon fast asleep.

About two in the morning I was awoke by a shout and a crunching, and felt myself dropping into the straw out of the elephant's mouth. She had stretched her proboscis over him — had taken me up so delicately that I felt nothing, and when Elliot shouted I was in her mouth; at his voice, that rang in my ears like the last trumpet, she dropped me like a hot potato. I rolled out of the straw, giving tongue a good one, and ran out of the shed. I had no sooner got to the inn than I felt a sickening pain in my shoulder and fainted away.

Her huge tooth had gone into my shoulder like a wedge. It was myself I had heard being crunched.

They did what they could for me, and I soon came to. When I recovered my senses I was seized with vomiting; but at last all violent symptoms abated; and I began to suffer great pain in the injured part, and did suffer for six weeks.

And so I scraped clear. Somehow or other Elliot was not drunk, or nothing could have saved me: for a second wonder he, who was a heavy sleeper, woke at the very

slight noise she made eating me; a moment later, and nothing could have saved me. I use too many words — suppose she had eaten me — what then?

They told Mr. Yates at breakfast, and he sent for me and advised me to lie quiet at Morpeth till the fever of the wound should be off me; but I refused. She was to start at ten, and I told him I should start with her.

Running from grim death like that, I had left my shoes behind in the shed, and M. Huguet sent his servant Baptiste, an Italian, for them.

Mr. Yates then asked me for all the particulars, and whilst I was telling him and M. Huguet, we heard a commotion in the street, and saw people running, and presently one of the waiters ran in and cried, —

"The elephant has killed a man, or near it."

Mr. Yates laughed and said, —

"Not quite so bad as that; for here is the man."

"No, no!" cried the waiter; "it is not him; it is one of the foreigners."

Mr. Yates started up all trembling: he ran to the stable: I followed him as I was, and there we saw a sight to make our blood run cold. On the corn-bin lay poor Baptiste crushed into a mummy. How it happened there was no means of knowing; but, no doubt, while he was groping in the straw for my wretched shoes, she struck him with her trunk, perhaps more than once; his breast-bones were broken to chips, and every time he breathed, which by God's mercy was not many minutes, the man's whole chest frame puffed out like a bladder with the action of his lungs — it was too horrible to look at.

Elliot had run at Baptiste's cry, but too late to save his life this time. He had drawn the man out of the straw as she was about to pound him to a jelly, and there the poor soul lay on the corn-bin, and by his side lay the

things he had died for: two old shoes. Elliot had found them in the straw, and put them there of all places in the world.

By this time all Morpeth was out. They besieged the doors, and vowed death to the elephant. M. Huguet became greatly alarmed: he could spare Baptiste, but he could not spare Djek. He got Mr. Yates to pacify the people: "Tell them something," said he.

"What on earth can I say for her over that man's bleeding body?" said Mr. Yates. "Curse her! would to God I had never seen her!"

"Tell them he used her cruel," said M. Huguet; "I have brought her off with that before now."

Well, my sickness came on again, partly no doubt by the sight and the remorse, and I was got to bed and lay there some days; so I did not see all that passed, but I heard some, and I know the rest by instinct now.

Half an hour after breakfast-time Baptiste died. On this the elephant was detained by the authorities, and a coroner's inquest was summoned, and sat in the shambles on the victim, with the butcheress looking on at the proceedings.

Pippin told me she took off a juryman's hat during the investigation, waved it triumphantly in the air, and placed it cleverly on her favorite's head, old Tom.

At this inquest two or three persons deposed on oath that the deceased had ill-used her more than once in France, in particular that he had run a pitchfork into her two years ago, that he had been remonstrated with, but in vain; unfortunately she had recognized him at once, and killed him out of revenge for past cruelty, or to save herself from fresh outrages.

This cooled the ardor against her. Some even took part with her against the man.

"Run a pitchfork into an elephant! Oh, for shame!

no wonder she killed him at last. How good of her not to kill him then and there — what forbearance — forgave it for two years, ye see."

There is a fixed opinion among men that an elephant is a good, kind creature; the opinion is fed by the proprietors of elephants, who must nurse the notion or lose their customers, and so a set tale is always ready to clear the guilty and criminate the sufferer; and this tale is greedily swallowed by the public. You will hear and read many such tales in the papers before you die. Every such tale is a lie.

How curiously things happen! Last year, i. e., more than twenty years after this event, my little girl went for a pound of butter to Newport Street. She brought it wrapped up in a scrap of a very old newspaper; in unrolling it, my eye by mere accident fell upon these words: "An inquest." I had no sooner read the paragraph than I put the scrap of paper away in my desk: it lies before me now, and I am copying it.

"An inquest was held at the Phœnix Inn, Morpeth, on the 27th ultimo, on view of the body of an Italian named Baptiste Bernard, who was one of the attendants on the female elephant which lately performed at the Adelphi. It appeared from the evidence that the man had stabbed the elephant in the trunk with a pitchfork about two years ago, while in a state of intoxication, and that on the Tuesday previous to the inquest, the animal caught hold of him with her trunk, and did him so much injury that he died in a few hours. Verdict, died from the wounds and bruises received from the trunk of an elephant. Deodand, five shillings."

Well, this has gone all abroad: for print travels like wind; and it is not fair to the friends and the memory of this Baptiste Bernard to print that he died by his own cruelty, or fault, or folly.

So take my deposition, and carry it to Milan, his native city.

I declare upon oath that the above is a lie. That the man was never an attendant upon the female elephant; he was an attendant on the female Huguet. For he was that lady's footman. His first introduction to Mademoiselle Djek was her killing him, and he died, not by any fault of his own, but by the will of God and through ignorance of the real nature of the *full-grown elephant*, the cunningest, most treacherous, and blood-thirsty beast that ever played the butcher among mankind.

What men speak dissolves in the air; what they print stands fast, and will look them in the face to all eternity. I print the truth about this man's death, so help me God.

Business is business. As soon as we had got the inquest over, and stamped the lie current, hid the truth, and buried the man, we marched south and played our little play at Newcastle.

Deodand for a human soul sent by murder to its account, five bob.

After Newcastle we walked to York and thence to Manchester. I crept along thoroughly crestfallen. Months and months I had watched and spied and tried to pluck out the heart of this Tom Elliot's mystery. I had failed. Months and months I had tried to gain some influence over Djek. I had failed — but for Elliot, it was clear I should not live a single day within reach of her trunk; this brute was my superior. I was compelled to look up to him, and I *did look up to him.*

As I tramped sulkily along, my smarting shoulder reminded me that in elephant, as in everything else I had tried, I was Jack, not master.

The proprietors had their cause of discontent too; we

had silenced the law, but we could not silence opinion. Somehow suspicion hung about her in the very air wherever she went. She never throve in the English provinces after the Morpeth job, and finding this, Mr. Yates said, "Oh, hang her, she has lost her character here. Send her to America." So he and M. Huguet joined partnership and took this new speculation on their shoulders. America was even in that day a great card if you went with an English or French reputation.

I had been thinking of leaving her and her old Tom in despair; but now that other dangers and inconveniences were to be endured besides her and her trunk, by some strange freak of human nature, or by fate, I began to cling to her like a limpet to a rock, the more you pull at him.

Mr. Yates dissuaded me. "Have nothing to do with her, Jack. She will serve you like all the rest. Stay at home, and I'll find something for you in the theatre."

I thought a great deal of Mr. Yates for this; for he was speaking against his own interest. I was a faithful servant to him, and he needed one about her. Many a five-pound note I had saved him already, and well he deserved it at my hands.

"No, sir," I said, "I shall be of use, and I can't bear to be nonplussed by two brutes like Elliot and her. I have begun to study her, and I must go on to the word 'finis!'"

Messrs. Yates and Huguet insured the elephant for twenty thousand pounds, and sent us all to sea together in the middle of November, a pretty month to cross the Atlantic in.

This was what betters call a hedge; and not a bad one.

Our party was Queen Djek, Mr. Stevenson her financier, Mr. Gallott her stage-manager and wrongful heir;

Elliot her keeper, her lord, her king; Pippin her slave, always trembling for his head; myself her commissariat; and one George Hinde from Wombwell's, her man-of-all-work.

She had a stout cabin built upon deck for her. It cost forty pounds to make; what she paid for the accommodation Heaven knows, but I should think a good round sum, for it was the curse of the sailors and passengers, and added fresh terrors to navigation; the steersman could not see the ship's head, until the sea took the mariners' part and knocked it into toothpicks.

Captain Sebor had such a passage with us as he had never encountered before; he told us so — and no wonder; he never had such a wholesale murderess on board before; contrary winds forever and stiff gales too. At last it blew great guns; and one night as the sun went down crimson in the Gulf of Florida, the sea running mountains high, I saw Captain Sebor himself was fidgety. He had cause: that night a tempest came on: the Ontario rolled fearfully, and groaned like a dying man; about two in the morning a sea struck her, smashed Djek's cabin to atoms, and left her exposed and reeling; another such would now have swept her overboard, but her wits never left her for a moment. She threw herself down flatter than any man could have conceived possible; out went all her four legs, and she glued her belly to the deck; the sailors passed a chain from the weather to the lee bulwarks, and she seized it with her proboscis, and held on like grim death. Poor thing, her coat never got not to say dry — she was like a great water-rat all the rest of the voyage.

The passage was twelve weeks of foul weather; the elephant began to be suspected of being the cause of this, and the sailors often looked askant at her, and said we should never see port till she walked the plank

into the Atlantic. If her underwriters saved their twenty thousand pounds, it was touch and go more than once or twice. Moreover, she ate so little all the voyage that it was a wonder to Elliot and me how she came not to die of sickness and hunger. I suppose she survived it all because she had more mischief to do.

As the pretty little witches sing in Mr. Locke's opera of "Macbeth:"

She must, she must, she must, she must, she must shed — much — more — blood.

CHAPTER VII.

Our preposterous long voyage deranged all the calculations that had been made for us in England, and we reached New York just at the wrong time. We found Master Burke playing at the Park Theatre, and we were forced to treat with an inferior house, the Bowery Theatre. We played there with but small success compared with what we had been used to in Europe. Master Burke filled the house — we did not fill ours — so that at last she was actually eclipsed by a human actor: to be sure it was a boy, not a man, and child's play is sometimes preferred by the theatre-going world even to horse-play.

The statesmen were cold to us; they had not at this time learned to form an opinion of their own at sight on such matters, and we did not bring them an overpowering European verdict to which they had nothing to do but sign their names. There was no groove cut for the mind to run in, and while they hesitated, the speculation halted. I think she would succeed there now; but at this time they were not ripe for an elephant.

We left New York and away to Philadelphia on foot and steamboat.

There is a place on the Delaware where the boat draws up to a small pier. Down this we marched, and about ten yards from the end the floor gave way under her weight, and Djek and her train fell into the sea. I was awoke from a reverie, and found myself sitting right atop of her, with my knees in Chesapeake Bay. Elliot had a rough Benjamin on, and as he was coming thundering down with the rest of the rubbish alive and dead, it caught in a nail, and he hung over the bay by the shoulder like an Indian fakeer, cursing and swearing for all the world like a dog barking. I never saw such a posture — and, oh! the language!

I swam out; but Djek was caught in a trap between the two sets of piles. The water was about two feet over her head, so that every now and then she disappeared, and then striking the bottom she came up again, plunging and rolling and making waves like a steamboat: her trunk she kept vertical like the hose of a diving-bell, and oh, the noises that came up from the bottom of the sea through that flesh-pipe: for about four hours she went up and down the gamut of "O Lord, what shall I do?" more than a thousand times, I think. We brought ropes to her aid, and boats, and men, and tried all we knew to move her, but in vain; and when we had exhausted our sagacity, she drew upon a better bank, her own. Talk of brutes not being able to reason — gammon. Djek could reason like Solomon; for each fresh difficulty she found a fresh resource. On this occasion she did what I never saw her do before or since: she took her enormous skull, and used it as a battering-ram against the piles: two of them resisted — no wonder — they were about eight inches in diameter; the third snapped like glass, and she plunged through and waddled

on shore. I met her with a bucket of brandy and hot water — stiff.

Ladies, who are said to sip this compound in your boudoirs while your husbands are smoking at the clubs, but I don't believe it of you, learn how this lady disposed of her wooden tumbler full. She thrust her proboscis into it. Whis—s—s—s—p! Now it is all in her trunk. Whis—s—s—sh! Now it is all in her abdomen: one breath drawn and exhaled sent it from the bucket home. This done, her eye twinkled, and she trumpeted to the tune of "All is well that ends well."

I should weary the reader were I to relate at length all the small incidents that befell us in the United States.

The general result was failure, loss of money, our salaries not paid up, and fearful embarrassments staring us in the face; we scraped through without pawning the elephant, but we were often on the verge of it. All this did not choke my ambition. Warned by the past, I never ventured near her (unless Elliot was there) for twelve months after our landing; but I was always watching Elliot and her to find the secret of his influence.

A fearful annoyance to the leaders of the speculation was the drunkenness of Old Tom and George Hinde: these two encouraged one another and defied us, and of course they were our masters, because no one but Elliot could move the elephant from place to place or work her on the stage.

One night Elliot was so drunk that he fell down senseless at the door of her shed on his way to repose. I was not near, but Mr. Gallott, it seems, was, and he told us she put out her proboscis, drew him tenderly in, laid him on the straw, and flung some straw over him or partly over him. Mr. Gallott is alive and a public char-

acter: you can ask him whether this is true: I tell this one thing on hearsay.

Not long after this, in one of the American towns, I forget which, passing by Djek's shed, I heard a tremendous row. I was about to call Elliot, thinking it was the old story, somebody getting butchered: but, I don't know how it was, something stopped me, and I looked cautiously in instead, and I saw Tom Elliot walking into her with a pitchfork — she trembling like a schoolboy with her head in a corner — and the blood streaming from her sides. As soon as he caught sight of me, he left off and muttered unintelligibly. I said nothing. I thought the more.

CHAPTER VIII.

We had to go by water to a place called City Point, and thence to Pittsville. I made a mistake as to the hour the boat started; and Djek & Co. went on board without me.

Well, you will say I could follow by the next boat. But how about the tin to pay the passage? My pocket was dry: and the treasurer gone on. But I had a good set of blacking brushes; so sold them, and followed on with the proceeds: got to City Point. Elephant gone on to Pittsville; that I expected. Twenty miles or so I had to tramp on an empty stomach. And now doesn't the Devil send me a fellow who shows me a short cut through a wood to Pittsville: into the wood I go. I thought it was to be like an English wood: out of the sun into a pleasant shade, and, by then you are cool, into the world again. Instead of that, "the deeper the deeper you are in it," as the song of the bottle says, the

further you were from getting out of it. Presently two roads instead of one, and then I knew I was done. I took one road: it twisted like a serpent. I had not been half an hour on it before I lost all the points of the compass. Says I, "I don't know whether I ever shall see daylight again; but if I do, City Point will be the first thing I shall see. You mark my words," said I.

So here was I lost in what they call a wood out there, but we should call a forest at home. And now, being in the heart of it, I got among the devilishest noises, and nothing to be seen to account for them: little feet pattering and scurrying along the ground, wings flapping out of trees; but what struck most awe into a chap from the Seven Dials was the rattle, the everlasting rattle and nothing to show. Often I have puzzled myself what this rattle could be. It was like a thousand rattlesnakes, and didn't I wish I was in the Seven Dials, though some get lost in them for that matter. After all, I think it was only insects; but insects by billions — you never heard anything like it in an English wood.

Just as I was losing heart in this enchanted wood, I heard an earthly sound, the tramp of a horse's foot. It was music.

But the leaves were so thick, I could not see where the horse was: he seemed to get farther off, and then nearer. At last the sound came so close I made a run, burst through a lot of green leaves, and came out plump on a man riding a gray cob. He up with the but-end of his whip to fell me, but seeing I was respectable, "Halloo, stranger!" says he, "guess you sort o' startled me." — "Beg pardon, sir," says I, "but I have lost my way." — "I see you are a stranger," said he.

So then he asked me where I was bound for, and I told him — Pittsville.

I won't insult the reader by telling him what he said

about the course I had been taking through the wood. I might as well tell him his A B C, or which side his bread and butter falls in the dust on. Then he asked me who I was, so I told him I was one of the elephant's domestics, leastways I did not word it so candid — "I was in charge of the elephant, and had taken a short cut."

Now he had heard of Djek, and seen her bills up, so he knew it was all right. "How am I to find my way out, sir?" said I. "Find your way out?" said he. "You will never find your way out." — "Good news, that."

He thought a bit, then he said, "The best thing you can do is to come home with me, and to-morrow I will send you on."

I could have hugged him.

"You had better walk behind me," says he, "my pony bites." So I tramped astern; and on we went patter, patter, patter through the wood. At first I felt as jolly as a sand-boy marching behind the pony; but when we had pattered best part of an hour, I began to have my misgivings. In all the enchanted woods ever I had read of there was a small trifle of a wizard or ogre that took you home and settled your hash. Fee, faw, fum, I smell the blood of an English-mun, etc.

And still on we pattered, and the sun began to decline, and the wood to darken, and still we pattered on. I was just thinking of turning tail and slipping back among the panthers and mosquitoes and rattlesnakes, when, oh, be joyful! we burst on a clearing, and there was a nice house in the middle of it, and out came the dogs jumping to welcome us, and niggers no end, with white eyeballs and grinders like snow.

They pulled him off his horse, and in we went. There was his good lady, and his daughter, a beautiful girl, and

such a dinner! We sat down, and I maintained a modest taciturnity for some minutes: "The silent hog eats the most acorns." After dinner he shows me all manner of ways of mixing the grog, and I show him one way of drinking it — when you can get it. Then he must hear about the elephant; so I tell him the jade's history, but bind him to secrecy.

Then the young lady puts in, "So you are really an Englishman?" and she looks me all over. "That you may take your oath of, miss," says I.

"Oh," says she, and smiles. I did not take it up at first, but I see what it was now. Me standing five feet four, I did not come up to her notion of the Father of all Americans. "Does this great people spring from such a little stock as we have here?" thinks my young lady. I should have up and told her the pluck makes the man and not the inches; but I lost that chance. Then being pressed with questions, I told them all my adventures, and they hung on my words. It was a new leaf to them, I could see that.

The young lady, her eyes glittered like two purple stars, at a stranger with the gift of the gab, that had seen so much life as I had, and midnight came in no time. Then I was ushered to bed. Now up to that time I had always gone to roost without pomp or ceremony; sometimes with a mole candle, but oftener a farthing dip, which I *have* seen it dart its beams out of a bottle instead of a flat candlestick.

This time a whole cavalcade of us went up the stairs; one blackie marched in my van with two lights, two blackies brought up my rear. They showed me into a beautiful room, and stood in the half-light with eyes and teeth like red-hot silver, glittering and diabolical. I thought of course they would go away now. Not they. Presently one imp of darkness brings me a chair.

I sit down and wonder. Other two lay hold of my boots and whip them off. This done they buzz about me like black and white fiends, fidgetting, till I longed to punch their heads. They pull my coat off and my trousers; then they hoist me into bed. This done, first one makes a run and tucks me in and grins over me diabolical; then another comes like a battering-ram, and tucks me in tighter. Fiend 3 looks at the work and puts the artful touches at the corners, and behold me wedged, and then the beneficent fiends mizzled with a hearty grin that seemed to turn them all ivory. I could not believe my senses; I had never been tucked in since my mother's time.

In the morning, struggled out, and came down to breakfast. Took leave of the good Samaritan, who appointed two of my niggers to see me out of the wood, made my bow to the ladies, and away with a grateful heart. The niggers conducted me clear of the wood, and set me on the broad road. Then came one of the pills a poor fellow has to stomach. I had made friends with the poor darkies, and now I had not even a few pence to give them, and such a little would have gone so far with them. I have often felt the bitterness of poverty, but never I do think as when I parted with my poor niggers at the edge of the wood, and was forced to see them go slowly home without a farthing.

I wish these few words could travel across the water, and my good host might read them, and see I have not forgotten him all these years. But, dear heart, you may be sure he is not upon the earth now. It is years ago, and a man that had the heart to harbor a stranger and a wanderer, why, he would be one of the first to go.

We steamed and tramped up and down the United States of America. On our return to Norfolk, she broke

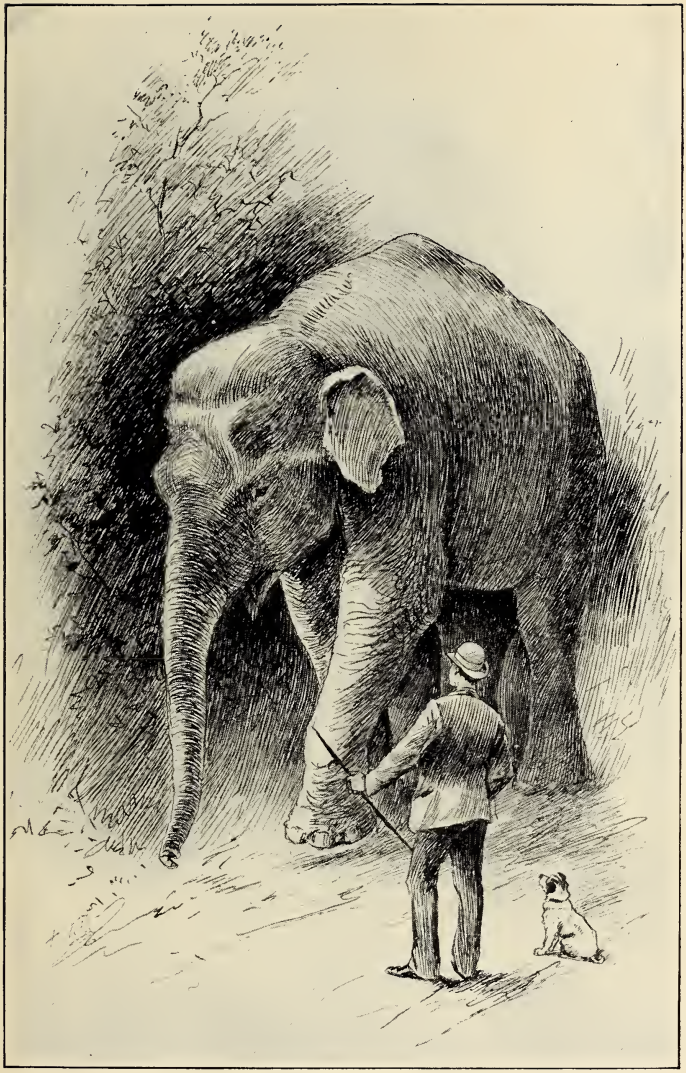
loose at midnight, slipped into the town, took up the trees on the boulevard and strewed them flat, went into the market, broke into a vegetable shop, munched the entire stock; next to a coachmaker's, took off a carriage-wheel, opened the door, stripped the cushions, and we found her eating the stuffing.

One day at noon, we found ourselves fourteen miles from the town, I forget its name, we had to play in that very night. Mr. Gallott had gone on to rehearse, etc., and it behooved us to be marching after him. At this juncture Old Tom, being rather drunk, feels a strong desire to be quite drunk, and refuses to stir from his brandy-and-water. Our exchequer was in no condition to be trifled with thus. If Elliot & Co. became helpless for an hour or two we should arrive too late for the night's performance, and Djek eating her head off all the while. I coaxed and threatened our two brandy sponges; but in vain. They stuck and sucked. I was in despair, and being in despair, came to a desperate resolution. I determined to try and master her myself then and there, and to defy these drunkards.

I told Pippin my project. He started back aghast; he viewed me in the light of a madman. "Are you tired of your life?" said he. But I was inflexible. Seven Dials' pluck was up. I was enraged with my drunkards, and I was tired of waiting so many years, the slave of a quadruped whose master was a brute.

Elephants are driven with a rod of steel sharpened at the end; about a foot from the end of this weapon is a large hook; by sticking this hook into an elephant's ear, and pulling it, you make her sensible which way you want her to go, and persuade her to comply.

Armed with this tool I walked up to Djek's shed, and in the most harsh and brutal voice I could command, bade her come out. She moved in the shed, but hesi-



ON WE MARCHED, THE BEST OF FRIENDS.

tated. I repeated the command still more repulsively, and out she came towards me very slowly.

With beasts such as lions, tigers, and elephants, great promptitude is the thing. Think for them ! Don't give *them* time to think, or their thoughts may be evil. I had learned this much, so I introduced myself by driving the steel into Djek's ribs, and then hooking her ear, while Pippin looked down from a first-story window. If Djek had known how my heart was beating, she would have killed me then and there ; but, observing no hesitation on my part, she took it all as a matter of course, and walked with me like a lamb. I found myself alone with her on the road, and fourteen miles of it before us. It was a serious situation, but I was ripe for it now. All the old women's stories and traditions about an elephant's character had been driven out of me by experience and washed out with blood. I had fathomed Elliot's art. I had got what the French call the riddle-key of Mademoiselle Djek, and that key was "steel!"

On we marched, the best of friends; there were a number of little hills on the road, and as we mounted one, a figure used to appear behind us on the crest of the last between us and the sky — this was the gallant Pippin, solicitous for his friend's fate, but desirous of not partaking it if adverse. And still the worthy Djek and I marched on, the best of friends. About a mile out of the town she put out her trunk and tried to curl it round me in a caressing way. I met this overture by driving the steel into her till the blood squirted out of her. If I had not, the siren would have killed me in the course of the next five minutes. Whenever she relaxed her speed, I drove the steel into her. When the afternoon sun smiled gloriously on us, and the poor thing felt nature stir in her heart, and began to frisk in

her awful clumsy way, pounding the great globe, I drove the steel into her: if I had not, I should not be here to relate this sprightly narrative.

Meantime at —— her stage-manager and financier were in great distress and anxiety, — four o'clock, and no elephant. At last they got so frightened, they came out to meet us, and presently to their amazement and delight Djek strode up with her new general. Their ecstasy was great to think the whole business was no longer at a drunkard's mercy. "But how did you manage? how ever did ye win her heart?" — "With this," said I, and showed them the bloody steel.

We had not been in town half an hour before Tom and George came in. They were not so drunk but what they trembled for their situations after my exploit, and rolled and zigzagged after us as fast as they could.

By these means I rose from mademoiselle's slave to be her friend and companion.

CHAPTER IX.

This feat kept my two drunkards in better order, and revived my own dormant ambition. I used now to visit her by myself, steel in hand, to feed her, etc., and scrape acquaintance with her by every means — steel in hand. One day I was feeding her, when suddenly I thought a house had fallen on me. I felt myself crashing against the door, and there I was lying upon it in the passage with all the breath driven clean out of my body. Pippin came and lifted me up, and carried me into the air. I thought I should have died before breath could get into my lungs again. She had done this with a push from the thick end of her proboscis. After awhile I came to.

I had no sooner recovered my breath than I ran into the stable, and came back with a pitchfork. Pippin saw my intention, and implored me for heaven's sake not to. I would not listen to him; he flung his arms round me. I threatened to turn the fork on him if he did not let me go.

"Hark!" said he, and sure enough there she was snorting and getting up her rage. "I know all about that," said I: "my death-warrant is drawn up, and if I don't strike, it will be signed: this is how she has felt her way with all of them before she has killed them. I have but one chance of life," said I, "and I won't throw it away without a struggle." I opened the door, and with a mind full of misgivings I walked quickly up to her. I did not hesitate or raise the question which of us two was to suffer; I knew that would not do. I sprang upon her like a tiger, and drove the pitchfork into her trunk. She gave a yell of dismay, and turned a little from me; I drove the fork into her ear.

Then came out her real character.

She wheeled round, ran her head into a corner, stuck out her great buttocks, and trembled all over like a leaf. I stabbed her with all my force for half an hour till the blood poured out of every square foot of her huge body, and, during the operation, she would have crept into a nut-shell if she could. I filled her as full of holes as a cloved orange.

The blood that trickled out of her saved mine: and for the first time I walked out of her shambles her master.

One year and six months after we had landed at New York to conquer another hemisphere, we turned tail and sailed for England again. We had a prosperous voyage with the exception of one accident. George Hinde from incessant brandy had delirium tremens, and one night,

in a fit of it, he had just sense enough to see that he was hardly to be trusted with the care of himself. "John," said he to me, "tie me to this mast hand and foot." I demurred: but he begged me for heaven's sake; so I bound him hand and foot as per order. This done, some one called me down below, and whilst I was there, it seems George got very uncomfortable and began to halloo and complain. Up comes the captain; sees a man lashed to the mast. "What game is this?" says he. "It is that little blackguard John," says Hinde, "he caught me sleeping against the mast, and took a mean advantage: do loose me, captain!" The captain made sure it was a sea-jest, and loosed him with his own hands. "Thank you, captain," says George; "you are a good fellow. God bless you all!" and with these words he ran aft and jumped into the sea. A Yankee sailor made a grab at him and just touched his coat, but it was too late to save him, and we were going before the wind ten knots an hour. Thus George Hinde fell by brandy: his kindred spirit old Tom seemed ready to follow without the help of water salt or fresh. This man's face was now an uniform color, white, with a scarce perceptible bluish, yellowish tinge. He was a moving corpse.

Drink forever! It makes men thieves, murderers, asses, and paupers; but what about that, so long as it sends them to an early grave, with "beast" for their friends to write over their tombstones, unless they have a mind to tell lies in a churchyard, and that is a common trick.

We arrived at the mouth of the Thames.

Some boats boarded us with fresh provisions and delicacies; among the rest one I had not tasted for many a day, it is called soft-tommy at sea, and, on land, bread. The merchant stood on tiptoe and handed a loaf towards me, and I leaned over the bulwarks and stretched down

to him with a shilling in my hand. But, as ill-luck would have it, the shilling slipped from my fingers and fell. If it had been some men's it would have fallen into the boat; others', into the sea, slap; but it was mine, and so it fell on the boat's very rim and then danced to its own music into the water. I looked after it in silence; a young lady, with whom I had made some little acquaintance during the voyage, happened to be at my elbow, and she laughed most merrily as the shilling went down. I remember being astonished that she laughed. The man still held out the bread, but I shook my head. "I must go without now," said I; the young lady was quite surprised. "Why, it is worth a guinea," cried she. "Yes, miss," said I, sheepishly, "but we can't always have what we like, you see; I ought to have held my shilling tighter."

"Your shilling," cries she. "Oh!" and she dashed her hand into her pocket and took out her purse, and I could see her beautiful white fingers tremble with eagerness as they dived among the coin. She soon bought the loaf, and as she handed it to me, I happened to look in her face, and her cheek was red and her eyes quite brimming: her quick woman's heart had told her the truth, that it was a well-dressed and tolerably well-behaved man's last shilling, and he returning after years of travel to his native land.

I am sure, until the young lady felt for me, I thought nothing of it; I had been at my last shilling more than once. But when I saw she thought it hard, I began to think it was hard, and I remember the water came into my own eyes. Heaven bless her, and may she never want a shilling in her pocket, nor a kind heart near her to show her the world is not all made of stone!

We had no money to pay our passage, and we found Mr. Yates somewhat embarrassed; we had cost him a

thousand or two and no return. So, whilst he wrote to M. Huguet, that came to pass in England which we had always just contrived to stave off abroad.

The elephant was pawned.

And now I became of use to the proprietors; I arranged with the mortgagees, and they made the spout a show-place. I used to exhibit her and her tricks, and with the proceeds I fed her, and Elliot, and myself.

We had been three weeks in pledge, when, one fine morning, as I was showing off seated on the elephant's back, I heard a French exclamation of surprise and joy; I looked down, and there was M. Huguet. I came down to him, and he, whose quick eye saw a way through me out of drunken Elliot, gave a loose to his feelings and embraced me *à la Francaise:* "which made the common people very much to admire," as the song has it, also a polite howl of derision greeted our Continental affection. M. Huguet put his hand into his pocket, and we got out of limbo, and were let loose upon suffering humanity once more.

They talk as if English gold did everything; but it was French gold bought us off, I know that; for I saw it come out of his pocket.

As soon as we were redeemed, we took an engagement at Astley's, and, during this engagement, cadaverous Tom, finding we could master her, used to attend less and less to her, and more and more to brandy.

A certain baker who brought her loaves every morning for breakfast, used to ask me to let him feed her himself. He admired her, and took this way of making her fond of him. One day I had left these two friends and their loaves together for a minute, when I heard a fearful cry. I knew the sound too well by this time, and as I ran back, I had the sense to halloo at her; this saved the man's life: at the sound of my voice she

dropped him from a height of about twelve feet, and he rolled away like a ball of worsted. I dashed in, up with the pitchfork and into her like lightning, and while the blood was squirting out of her from a hundred little prong-holes, the poor baker limped away.

Any gentleman or lady who wishes to know how a man feels when seized by an elephant preparatory to being squelched, can consult this person; he is a respectable tradesman; his name is Johns: he lives near Astley's Theatre, or used to, and for obvious reasons can tell you this one anecdote out of many such better than I can; that is, if he has not forgotten it, and *I dare say he hasn't* — ask him!

After Astley's, Drury Lane engaged us to play second to the "Lions of Mysore;" rather a down-come; but we went. In this theatre we behaved wonderfully. Notwithstanding the number of people continually buzzing about us, we kept our temper and did not smash a single one of these human gnats so trying to our little female irritability and feeble nerves. The only thing we did wrong was, we broke through a granite mountain and fell down on to the plains, and hurt our knee, and broke one super, — only one.

The "Lions of Mysore" went a-starring to Liverpool, and we accompanied them. Whilst we were there the cholera broke out in England, and M. Huguet summoned us hastily to France. We brushed our hats, put on our gloves, and walked at one stretch from Liverpool to Dover. There we embarked for Boulogne; Djek, cadaverous Tom, wolf-skin-lamb Pippin, and myself. I was now in Huguet's service at fifty francs a week, as coadjutor and successor of cadaverous Tom, whose demise was hourly expected even by us who were hardened by use to his appearance, which was that of the ghost of delirium tremens. We arrived off Boulogne Pier; but

there we were boarded by men in uniforms and mustaches, and questions put about the cholera, which disease the civic authorities of Boulogne were determined to keep on the other side of the Channel. The captain's answer proving satisfactory, we were allowed to run into the port.

In landing anywhere, Djek and her attendants had always to wait till the other passengers had got clear, and we did so on this occasion. At length our turn came; but we had no sooner crossed the gangway, and touched French ground, than a movement took place on the quay, and a lot of bayonets bristled in our faces, and "*halte là*" was the word. We begged an explanation; in answer an officer glared with eyes like saucers and pointed with his finger at Elliot. The truth flashed on us. The Frenchmen were afraid of cholera coming over from England, and here was a man who looked plague, cholera or death himself in person. We remonstrated through an interpreter, but Tom's face was not to be refuted by words. Some were for sending us back home to so diseased a country as this article must have come out of; but milder measures prevailed. They set apart for our use a little corner of the quay, and there they roped us in and sentinelled us. And so for four days, in the polished kingdom of France, we dwelt in a hut ruder far than any on the banks of the Ohio. Drink forever! At last, as Tom Coffin got neither a worse nor a better color, they listened to reason and let us loose upon the nation at large, and away we tramped for Paris.

Times were changed with us in one respect; we no longer marched to certain victory; our long ill-success in America had lessened our arrogance, and we crept along towards Paris. But, luckily for us, we had now a presiding head and a good one. The soul of business is puffing; and no man puffed better than our chief

M. Huguet. Half way between Boulogne and Paris we were met by a cavalier carrying our instructions how we were to enter Paris; and, arrived at St. Denis, instead of going straight on, we skirted the town, and made our formal entry by the Bois de Boulogne and the Arch of Triumph. Huguet had come to terms with Franconi, and, to give Djek's engagement more public importance, Franconi's whole troop were ordered out to meet us and escort us in. They paraded up and down the Champs Élysées first, to excite attention and inquiry, and, when the public were fairly agog, our cavalcade formed outside the barrier and came glittering and prancing through the arch. An elephant has her ups and her downs like the rest. Djek, the despised of Kentucky and Virginia, burst on Paris, the centre of a shining throng. Franconi's bright amazons and exquisite cavaliers rode to and fro our line carrying sham messages with earnest faces; Djek was bedecked with ribbons and seemed to tread more majestically, and our own hearts beat higher, as, amidst grace and beauty, and pomp, sun shining — hats waving — feathers bending — mob cheering — trumpets crowing — and flints striking fire, we strode proudly into the great city, the capital of pleasure.

CHAPTER X.

These were bright days to me. I was set over Old Tom — fancy that; and my salary doubled his: I had fifty francs a week, and cleared as much more by showing her privately in her stable.

Money melts in London; it evaporates in Paris. Pippin was a great favorite both with men and women behind the scenes at Franconi's: he introduced me to

charming companions of both sexes; gayety reigned, and tin and morals "made themselves air, into which they vanished." — *Shakespeare.*

Towards the close of her engagement Djek made one of her mistakes: she up with her rightful heir, and broke his ribs against the side scenes.

We nearly had to stop her performances! we could not mend our rightful heir by next night, and substitutes did not pour in. "I won't go on with her," "I won't play with her," was a cry that even the humblest and neediest began to raise. I am happy to say that she was not under my superintendence when this rightful heir came to grief.

And now the cholera came to Paris, and theatricals of all sorts declined, for there was a real tragedy playing in every street. The deaths were very numerous and awfully sudden; people were struck down in the streets as if by lightning; gloom and terror hung over all.

When this terrible disease is better known, it will be found to be of the nature of strong poison, and its cure, if any, will be strychnine, belladonna, or likelier still some quick and deadly mineral poison that kills the healthy with cramps and discoloration.

In its rapid form cholera is not to be told from quick poison, and hence sprung up among the lower order in Paris a notion that wholesale poisoning was on foot.

Pippin and I were standing at the door of a wine-shop waiting for our change; his wild appearance attracted first one and then another: little knots of people collected and eyed us: then they began to talk and murmur, and cast suspicious glances. "Come away," said Pippin, rather hastily. We walked off — they walked after us, increasing like a snowball, and they murmured louder and louder. I asked Pippin what the fools were gabbling about; he told me they suspected us

of being the poisoners; at this I turned round, and being five feet four, and English, was for punching some of their heads; but the athletic pacific Italian would not hear of it, much less co-operate: and now they surrounded us just at the corner of one of the bridges, lashing themselves into a fury, and looking first at us, and then at the river below. Pippin was as white as death, and I thought it was all up myself, when by good luck a troop of mounted gendarmes issued from the palace. Pippin hailed them; they came up, and, after hearing both sides, took us under their protection, and off we marched between two files of cavalry, followed by the curses of a superficial populace. Extremes don't do. Pippin was the color of ink, Elliot of paper: both their mugs fell under suspicion, and nearly brought us to grief.

Franconi closed, and Djek, Huguet and Co. started on a provincial tour.

They associated themselves on this occasion with Michelet, who had some small wild animals, such as lions, tigers, and leopards.

Our first move was to Versailles. Here we built a show-place and exhibited Djek, not as an actress, but as a private elephant, in which capacity she did the usual elephant business, besides a trick or two that most of them have not brains enough for; whereof anon.

Michelet was the predecessor of Van Amburgh and Carter, and did everything they do, a dozen years before they were ever heard of: used to go into the lions' den, pull them about, and put his head down their throats, and their paws round his neck, etc.

I observed this man and learned something from him. Besides that general quickness and decision, which is necessary with wild animals, I noticed that he was always on the lookout for mischief, and always punished

it before it came. Another point, he always attacked the offending part, and so met the evil in front; for instance, if one of his darlings curled a lip and showed a tooth, he hit him over the mouth that moment and nowhere else; if one elongated a claw, he hit him over the foot like lightning. He read the whole crew as I had learned to read Djek, and conquered their malice by means of that marvellous cowardice which they all show if they can see no sign of it in you.

There are no two ways with wild beasts. If there is a single white spot in your heart — leave them; for your life will be in danger every moment. If you can despise them, and keep the rod always in sight, they are your humble servants; nobody more so.

Our exhibition, successful at first, began to flag; so then the fertile brain of M. Huguet had to work. He proposed to his partner to stand a tiger and he would stand a bull, and "we will have a joint-stock fight like the King of Oude." Michelet had his misgivings; but Huguet overruled him. That ingenious gentleman then printed bills advertising for a certain day a fight between a real Bengal tiger and a ferocious bull that had just gored a man to death. This done, he sent me round the villages to find and hire a bull: "Mind you get a mild one, or I shall have to pay for a hole in the tiger's leather." I found one which the owner consented to risk for so much money down, and the damage he should sustain from tiger to be valued independently by two farmers after the battle.

The morning of the fight Pippin and I went for our bull, and took him out of the yard towards Versailles; but when we had gone about two hundred yards, he became uneasy, looked round, sniffed about, and finally turned round, spite of all our efforts, and paced home again. We remonstrated with the proprietor. "Oh,"

said he, "I forgot — he won't start without the wench." So the wench in question was sent for (his companion upon amatory excursions), she went with us, and launched us towards Versailles. This done, she returned home, and we marched on; but before we had gone a furlong, Taurus showed symptoms of uneasiness; these increased, and at last he turned round and walked tranquilly home. We hung upon him, thrashed him, and bullied him, all to no purpose. His countenance was placid, but his soul resolved, and he walked home slowly, but inevitably: so then there was nothing for it but to let him have the wench all the way to the tiger; and she would not go to Versailles till she had put on some new finery, short waist, coal-scuttle bonnet, etc. More time lost with that — and, when we did arrive in the arena, the spectators were tired of waiting. The bull stood in the middle confused and stupid. The tiger was in his cage in a corner; we gave him time to observe his prey, and then we opened the door of his cage.

A shiver ran through the audience. (They were all seated in boxes looking down on the area.)

A moment more, and the furious animal would spring upon his victim, and his fangs and claws sink deep into its neck, etc., *vide* book of travels.

One moment succeeded to another, and nothing occurred. The ferocious animal lay quiet in his cage, and showed no sign; so then we poked the ferocious animal — he snarled, but would not venture out. When this had lasted a long time, the spectators began to doubt his ferocity, and to goose the ferocious animal. So I got a red-hot iron and nagged him behind. He gave a yell of dismay and went into the arena like a shot. He took no notice of the bull: all he thought of was escape from the horrors that surrounded him. Winged by terror, he gave a tremendous spring and landed his fore-

paws on the boxes, stuck fast and glared in at the spectators. They rushed out yelling. He dug his hind-claws into the woodwcrk, and by slow and painful degrees clambered into the boxes. When he got in, the young and active were gone home, and he ran down the stairs among the old people that could not get clear so quick as the rest. He was so frightened at the people that he skulked and hid himself in a corn-field, and the people were so frightened at him that they ran home and locked their street-doors. So one coward made many.

They thought the poor wretch had *attacked* them, and the journal next day maintained this view of the transaction, and the town to this day believes it. We netted our striped coward with four shutters, and kicked him into his cage.

The bull went home with "the wench," and to this day his thick skull has never comprehended what the deuce he went to Versailles for.

This was how he competed with Oriental monarchs.

We marched southward, through Orleans, Tours, etc., to Bordeaux, and were pretty well received in all these places except at one small place whose name I forget. Here they hissed her out of the town at sight. It turned out she had been there before and pulverized a brush-maker, a popular man amongst them.

Soon after Bordeaux she had words with the lions; they, in their infernal conceit, thought themselves more attractive than Djek. It is *vice versa*, and by a long chalk, said Djek and Co. The parties growled a bit, then parted to meet no more in this world.

From Bordeaux we returned by another route to Paris; for we were only starring it in the interval of our engagement as an actress with Franconi. We started one morning from —— with light hearts, our faces turned

towards the gay city; Elliot, Pippin, and I. Elliot and I walked by the side of the elephant, Pippin walking some forty yards in the rear. He never trusted himself nearer to her on a march.

We were plodding along in this order, when, all in a moment, without reason or warning of any sort, she spun round between us on one heel like a thing turning on a pivot, and strode back like lightning at Pippin. He screamed and ran, but before he could take a dozen steps, she was upon him and struck him down with her trunk and trampled upon him; she then wheeled round and trudged back as if she had merely stopped to brush off a fly, or pick up a stone. After the first moment of stupefaction both Elliot and I had run after her with all the speed we had: but so rapid was her movement, and so instantaneous the work of death, that we only met her on her return from her victim. I will not shock the reader by describing the state in which we found our poor comrade: but he was crushed to death: he never spoke, and I believe and trust he never felt anything for the few minutes that breath lingered in his body. We kneeled down and raised him, and spoke to him, but he could not hear us. When Djek got her will of one of us, all our hope used to be to see the man die; and so it was with poor dear Pippin; mangled, and life impossible, we kneeled down and prayed to God for his death; and by Heaven's mercy, I think in about four minutes from the time he got his death-blow, his spirit passed away, and our well-beloved comrade and friend was nothing now but a lump of clay on our hands.

We were some miles from any town or village, and did not know what to do, and how to take him to a resting-place; at last we were obliged to tie the body across the proboscis, and cover it as well as we could, and so we made his murderess carry him to the little town of

La Palice; yes, La Palice. Here we stopped, and a sort of inquest was held, and M. Huguet attended and told the old story; said the man had been cruel to her, and she had put up with it as long as she could. Verdict — "Served him right," — and so we lied over our poor friend's murdered body, and buried him with many sighs in the little churchyard of La Palice, and then trudged on sad and downcast towards the gay capital.

CHAPTER XI.

I THINK a lesson is to be learned from this sad story. Too much fear is not prudence. Had poor Pippin walked with Elliot and me alongside the elephant, she dared not have attacked him. But through fear he kept forty yards in the rear, and she saw a chance to get him by himself: and, from my knowledge of her, I have little doubt she had meditated this attempt for months before she carried it out. Poor Pippin!

We arrived in Paris to play with Franconi. Now it happened to be inconvenient to Franconi to fulfil his engagement. He accordingly declined us. M. Huguet was angry: threatened legal proceedings. Franconi answered, "Where is Pippin?" Huguet shut up. Then Franconi followed suit; if hard pressed, he threatened to declare in open court that it was out of humanity alone he declined to fulfil his engagement. This stopped M. Huguet's mouth altogether. He took a place on the Boulevard, and we showed her and her tricks at three prices, and did a rattling business. Before we had been a fortnight in Paris, old Tom Elliot died at the Hospital Dubois, and I became her vizier at a salary of one hundred francs per week.

Having now the sole responsibility, I watched her as you would a powder-magazine lighted by gas. I let nobody but M. Huguet go near her in my absence. This gentleman continued to keep her sweet on him with lumps of sugar, and to act as her showman when she exhibited publicly.

One day we had a message from the Tuileries, and we got the place extra clean; and the King's children paid her a visit — a lot of little chaps — I did not know their names, but I suppose it was Prince Joinville, Aumale, etc. All I know is that while these little Louis Philippes were coaxing her, and feeding her, and cutting about her and sliding down her, and I was a-telling them she was a duck, the perspiration was running down my back one moment and cold shivers the next, and I thanked Heaven devoutly when the young gents went back to their papa and mamma and no bones broken. The young gentlemen reported her affability, and my lies, to the King, and he engaged her to perform gratis in the Champs Élysées during the three days' fête. Fifteen hundred francs for this.

But Huguet was penny wise and pound foolish to agree: for it took her gloss off. Showed her gratis to half the city.

Among Djek's visitors came one day a pretty young lady, a nursery-governess to some nobleman's children, whose name I forget, but he was English. The children were highly amused with Djek, and quite loath to go. The young lady, who had a smattering of English as I had of French, put several questions to me. I answered them more polite than usual on account of her being pretty, and I used a privilege I had and gave her an order for free admission some other day. She came, with only one child, which luckily was one of those deeply meditative ones that occur but rarely, and only

bring out a word every half-hour: so mademoiselle and I had a chat, which I found so agreeable that I rather neglected the general public for her. I made it my business to learn where she aired the children, and one vacant morning, dressed in the top of the fashion, I stood before her in the garden of the Tuileries; she gave a half-start and a blush, and seemed very much struck with astonishment at this *rencontre:* she was a little less astonished next week when the same thing happened, but still she thought these coincidences remarkable, and said so. In short, I paid my addresses to Mademoiselle ——. She was a charming brunette from Geneva, greatly my superior in education and station. I was perfectly conscious of this, and instantly made this calculation: "All the better for me if I can win her." But the reader knows my character by this time, and must have observed how large a portion of it effrontery forms. I wrote to her every day, sometimes in the French language; no, not in the French language; in French words. She sometimes answered in English words. She was very pretty and very interesting, and I fancied her. When a man is in love he can hardly see difficulties: I pressed her to marry me, and I believed she would consent. When I came to this point the young lady's gayety declined, and when I was painting her pictures of our conjugal happiness, she used to sigh instead of brightening at the picture: at last I pressed her so hard that she consented to write to Geneva and ask her parents' consent to our union: when the letter went, I was in towering spirits. I was now in the zenith of my prosperity: the risks I had run with Djek were rewarded by a heavy salary and the post of honor near her, and, now that I was a little weary of roaming the world alone with an elephant, fate had thrown in my way a charming companion who would cheer the weary road.

Dreams.

The old people at Geneva saw my position with another eye. "He is a servant liable to lose his place at any moment by any one of a hundred accidents, and his profession is a discreditable one: why, he is a showman."

They told her all this in language so plain that she would never show me the letter. I was for defying their advice and authority, but she would not hear of it. I was forced to temporize. "In a month's time," said I to myself, "her scruples will melt away." But in less than a fortnight the order came for us to march into Flanders. I communicated this cruel order to my sweetheart; she turned pale, and made no secret of her attachment to me and of the pain she felt at parting. Every evening before we left Paris I saw her, and implored her to trust herself to me and leave Paris as my wife. She used to smile at my pictures of wedded happiness, and cry the next minute because she dared not give herself and me that happiness; but with all this she was firm and would not fly in her parents' face.

At last came a sad and bitter hour: hat in hand, as the saying is, I made a last desperate endeavor to persuade her to be mine, and not to let this parting take place at all. She was much agitated, but firm; and the more I said, the firmer she became. So at last I grew frantic and reproached her. I called her a cold-hearted coquette, and we parted in anger and despair.

Away into the wide world again, not, as I used to start on these pilgrimages, with a stout heart and iron nerves, but cold and weary and worn out before the journey had begun. As we left Paris behind us I had but one feeling: that the best of life was at an end for me. My limbs took me along like machinery, but my heart was a lump of ice inside me, and I would have

thanked any man for knocking me on the head and ending the monotonous farce of my existence. Ay, gentlefolks, even a poor mechanic can feel like this when the desire of his heart is balked forever.

Trudge, trudge, trudge! for ever and ever.

Tramp, tramp, tramp! for ever and ever.

A man gets faint and weary of it at last, and there comes a time when he pines for a hearthstone and a voice he can believe, a part, at least, of what it says, and a Sunday of some sort now and then; and my time was come to long for these things, and for a pretty and honest face about me to stand for the one bit of peace and the one bit of truth in my vagabond-charlatan life.

I lost my appetite and sleep, and was very nearly losing heart altogether. My clothes hung about me like bags, I got so thin. It was my infernal occupation that cured me after all. Djek gave me no time even for despair: the moment I became her sole guardian I had sworn on my knees she should never kill another man; judge whether I had to look sharp after her to keep the biped from perjury and the quadruped from murder. I slept with her, rose early, fed her, walked twenty miles with her, or exhibited her all day, sometimes did both, and at night rolled into the straw beside her, too deadly tired to feel all my unhappiness; and so, after awhile, time and toil blunted my sense of disappointment, and I trudged and tramped and praised Djek's moral qualities in the old routine. Only now and then — when I saw the country lads in France or Belgium going to church dressed in their best with their sweethearts, and I in prison in the stable with my four-legged hussy, waiting perhaps till dark to steal out and march to some fresh town — I used to feel as heavy as lead, and as bitter as wormwood, and wish we were all dead together by way of a change.

A man needs a stout heart to go through the world at all: but most of all he needs it for a roving life; don't you believe any other, no matter who tells you.

With this brief notice of my feelings, I pass over two months' travel. All through, I spare the reader much, though I dare say he doesn't see it.

Sir, the very names of the places I have visited would fill an old-fashioned map of Europe.

Talk of Ulysses and his travels; he never saw the tenth part of what I have gone through.

I have walked with Djek farther than round the world during the eleven years I trudged beside her; it is only twenty-four thousand miles round the world.

After a year's pilgrimage, we found ourselves at Doncheray near Sedan.

Here we had an incident. Monsieur Huguet was showing her to the public with the air of a prince, and in his maréchal-of-France costume, glittering with his theatrical cross of the Legion of Honor. He was not particular what he put on, so that it shone and looked well. He sent me for something connected with the performance, a pistol, I think. I had hardly ten steps to go, but during the time I was out of her sight, I heard a man cry out and the elephant snort. I ran back, hallooing as I came. As I ran in I found the elephant feeling for something in the straw with her foot, and the people rushing out of the doors in dismay; the moment she saw me she affected innocence, but trembled from head to foot. I drew out from the straw a thing you would have taken for a scarecrow, or a bundle of rags. It was my master, M. Huguet, his glossy hat battered, his glossy coat stained and torn, and his arm broken in two places; a moment more, and her foot would have been on him and his soul crushed out of his body.

The people were surprised when they saw the furious,

snorting monster creep into a corner to escape a little fellow five feet four, who got to the old weapon, pitchfork, and drove it into every part of her but her head. She hid that in the corner the moment she saw blood in my eye.

We got poor M. Huguet to bed, and a doctor from the hospital to him, and a sorrowful time he had of it; and so after standing good for twelve years, lump sugar fell to the ground. Pitchfork held good.

At night more than a hundred people came to see whether I was really so hardy as to sleep with this ferocious animal. To show them my sense of her, I lay down between her legs. On this she lifted her fore-feet singly, and with the utmost care and delicacy drew them back over my body.

As soon as M. Huguet's arm was set, and doing well, he followed us — (we had got into France by this time), and came in along with the public to admire us, and, to learn how the elephant stood affected towards him now, he cried out in his most ingratiating way — in sugared tones — "Djek, my boy, Djek." At this sound Djek raised a roar of the most infernal rage, and Huguet, who knew her real character well enough, though he pretended not to, comprehended that her heart was now set upon his extinction, *malgré* twelve years of lump sugar.

He sent for me, and with many expressions of friendship offered me the invaluable animal for thirty thousand francs. I declined her without thanks. "Then I shall have *the pleasure* of killing her to-morrow," said the Frenchman, "and what will become of your salary, *mon pauvre garçon?*"

In short, he had me in a fix, and used his power. I bought her of him for twenty thousand francs, to be paid by instalments. I gave him the first instalment, a five-franc piece, and walked out of the wine-shop her sole proprietor.

The sense of property is pleasant, even when we have not paid for the article.

That night I formed my plans; there was no time to lose, because I had only a thousand francs in the world, and she ate a thousand francs a week, or nearly. I determined to try Germany, a poor country, but one which being quite inland could not have become callous to an elephant, perhaps had never seen one. I shall never forget the fine clear morning I started on my own account. The sun was just rising, the birds were tuning, and all manner of sweet smells came from the fields and the hedges. Djek seemed to step out more majestically than when she was another man's; my heart beat high. Eleven years ago I had started the meanest of her slaves, I had worked slowly, painfully, but steadily up, and now I was actually her lord and master, and half the world before me with the sun shining on it.

The first town I showed her at as mine was Verdun, and the next day I wrote to Mademoiselle —— at Paris, to tell her of the change in my fortunes This was the only letter I had sent; for we parted bad friends. I received a kinder answer than the abrupt tone of my letter deserved. She congratulated me and thanked me for remembering that whatever good-fortune befell me must give her particular pleasure, and in the postscript she told me she was just about to leave Paris and return to her parents in Switzerland.

Djek crossed into Prussia, tramped that country, and penetrated into the heart of Germany. As I had hoped, she descended on this nation with all the charm of novelty, and used to clear the copper[1] out of a whole village. I remember early in this trip being at a country inn. I saw rustics male and female dressed in their

[1] Germany is mostly made of copper. A bucketful of farthings was a common thing for me to have in my carriage.

Sunday clothes coming over the hills from every side to one point. I thought there must be a fair or something. I asked the landlord what they were all coming for. He said, "Why, you, to be sure." They never saw such a thing in their lives, and never will again.

In fact, at one or two small places we were stopped by the authorities, who had heard that we carried more specie out of little towns than the circulating medium would bear.

In short, my first coup was successful. After six months' Germany, Bavaria, Prussia, etc., I returned to the Rhine at Strasburg with eight thousand francs. During all this time she never hurt a soul, I watched her so fearfully close. So, being debarred from murder, she tried arson.

At a place in Bavaria her shed was suddenly observed to be in flames, and we saved her with difficulty.

The cause never transpired until now; but I saw directly how it had been done: I had unwarily left my coat in her way. The pockets were found emptied of all their contents, amongst which was a lucifer-box, fragments of which I found amongst the straw. She had played with this in her trunk, hammering it backwards and forwards against her knee, dropping the lighted matches into the straw when they stung her, and very nearly roasted her own beef, the mischievous, uneasy devil.

My readers will not travel with an elephant, but business of some sort will fall to the lot of them soon or late, and as charlatanry is the very soul of modern business, it may not be amiss to show how the humble artisan worked his elephant.

We never allowed ourselves to drop casually upon any place like a shower of rain.

A man in bright livery, green and gold, mounted on a showy horse, used to ride into the town or village, and

go round to all the inns making loud inquiries about their means of accommodation for the elephant and her train. Four hours after him, the people being now a little agog, another green-and-gold man came in on a trained horse, and inquired for No. 1; as soon as he had found him, the two rode together round the town, No. 2 blowing a trumpet and proclaiming the elephant, the nations she had instructed in the wonders of nature; the kings she had amused; her grandeur, her intelligence, and above all her dove-like disposition.

This was allowed to ferment for some hours, and, when expectation was at its height, the rest of the cavalcade used to heave in sight — Djek bringing up the rear. Arrived I used to shut her in out of sight, and send all my men and horses round, parading, trumpeting, and pasting bills; so that at last the people were quite ripe for her, and then we went to work. And thus the humble artisan and his elephant cut a greater dash than lions and tigers and mountebanks and quacks, and drew more money.

Here is one of my programmes: only I must remark that I picked up my French where I picked up the sincerity it embodies, in the circuses, coulisses, and cabarets of French towns; so that I can patter French as fast as you like, but of course I know no more about it than a pig — not to really know it.

Par permission de M. le Maire.
Le grand
ELEPHANT
du Roi de Siam
Du Cirque Olympique Franconi.
Mademoiselle Djek,

Eléphant colossal, de onze pieds de hauteur et du poids de neuf mille liv., est le plus grand éléphant que l'on ait vu en Europe.

M. H. B. Lott, naturaliste, pourvoyeur des ménageries des diverses cours d'Europe, actionnaire du Cirque Olympique et propriétaire de ce magnifique éléphant, qu'il a dressé au point de le présenter au public dans une pièce théâtrale qui fut créée pour Mademoiselle Djek il y a trois ans et demi, et qui a eu un si grand succès, sous le nom de l'Eléphant du Roi de Siam.

Le propriétaire, dans son voyage autour du monde, eut occasion d'acheter cet énorme quadrupède, qui le prit en affection, et qui, depuis onze ans qu'il le possède, ne s'est jamais démenti, se plaît à écouter son maître et exécute avec punctualité tout ce qu'il lui indique de faire.

Mademoiselle Djek, qui est dans toute la force de sa taille, a maintenant cent vingt-cinq ans; elle a onze pieds de hauteur — et pèse neuf mille livres.

Sa consommation dans les vingt-quatre heures excède deux cent livres — quarante livres de pain pour son déjeûner: à midi, du son et de l'avoine; le soir, des pommes-de-terre ou du riz cuit; et la nuit du foin et de la paille.

C'est le même éléphant qui a combattu la lionne de M. Martin. Cette lionne en furie, qu'une imprudence fit sortir de sa cage, s'élance sur M. H. B. Lott qui se trouvait auprès de son éléphant; voyant le danger il se réfugie derrière une des jambes de ce bon animal, qui relève sa trompe pour le protéger.[1] La lionne allait saisir M. H. B. Lott; l'éléphant la voit, rabat sa trompe, l'enveloppe, l'étouffe, la jette à loin, et l'aurait écrasée, si son maître ne lui eut dit de ne pas continuer.

Elle a ensuite allongé sa trompe, frappé du pied, criant et témoignant la satisfaction, qu'elle éprouvait d'avoir sauvé son ami d'une mort certaine, comme on a pu voir dans les journaux en février 1832.

Dans les cours des séances, on lui fera faire tous ses grands exercices qui sont dignes d'admiration, dont le grand nombre ne permet pas d'en donner l'analyse dans cette affiche, et qu'il faut voir pour l'en faire une idée juste.

Prix d'entrée: Premières Secondes
Les militaires et les enfants, moitié.

[1] I am a dull fellow now, as you see. But you must allow I have been a man of imagination.

I don't think but what my countrymen will understand every word of the above, but as there are a great number of Frenchmen in London who will read this, I think it would look unkind not to translate it into English for their benefit.

By permission of the Worshipful the Mayor
the great
ELEPHANT
of the King of Siam
From Franconi's Olympic Circus.
Mademoiselle Djek,
Colossal elephant, eleven feet high and weighs nine thousand pounds. The largest elephant ever seen in Europe.

Mr. H. B. Lott, naturalist, who supplies the menageries of the various courts of Europe, shareholder in the Olympic Circus, and proprietor of this magnificent elephant, which he has trained to such a height that he will present her to the public in a dramatic piece which was written for her three years and a half ago and had a great success under the title of the Elephant of the King of Siam.[1]

The proprietor, in his voyage round the globe, was fortunate enough to purchase this enormous quadruped, which became attached to him, and has been eleven years in his possession, during which time she has never once forgotten herself and executes with obedient zeal whatever he bids her.

Mademoiselle Djek has now arrived at her full growth, being one hundred and twenty-five years of age: she is eleven feet high and weighs nine thousand pounds. Her daily consumption exceeds two hundred pounds: she takes forty pounds of bread for her breakfast, at noon barley and oats, in the evening potatoes or rice cooked, and at night hay and straw.

This is the same elephant that fought with Mr. Martin's lioness. The lioness, whom the carelessness of the attendants

[1] My literary gent and me we nearly had words over this bit. "Why, it is all nominative case," says he. "Well," says I, "you can't have too much of a good thing. Can you better it?" says I. "Better it," says he, "why, I could not have come within a mile of it;" and he grinned: so I shut him up — for once.

allowed to escape from her cage, dashed furiously at Mr. H. B. Lott; fortunately he was near his elephant, and seeing the danger took refuge behind one of the legs of that valuable animal; she raised her trunk in her master's defence. The lioness made to seize him: but the elephant lowered her trunk, seized the lioness, choked her, flung her to a distance and would have crushed her to death if Mr. Lott had not commanded her to desist. After that she extended her trunk, stamped with her foot, trumpeting and showing her satisfaction, at having saved her friend from certain death; full accounts of which are to be seen in the journals of February, 1832.

In the course of the exhibition she will go through all her exercises, which are wonderful, and so numerous that it is impossible to enumerate them in this bill: they must be seen to form a just idea of them.

Prices: First places Second
Soldiers and children half-price.

Djek and I used to make our bow to our audiences in the following fashion: I came on with her and said, "*Otez mon chapeau pour saluer:*" then she used to take off my hat, wave it gracefully and replace it on my head — she then proceeded to pick up twenty-five-franc pieces one after another and keep them piled in the extremity of her trunk. She also fired pistols, and swept her den with a broom in a most pains-taking and ludicrous way.

But perhaps her best business in a real judge's eye was drinking a bottle of wine. The reader will better estimate this feat if he will fancy himself an elephant and lay down the book now and ask himself how he would do it — and read the following afterwards.

The bottle (cork drawn) stood before her. She placed the finger and thumb of her proboscis on the mouth, made a vacuum by suction, and then, suddenly inverting the bottle, she received the contents in her trunk; the difficulty now was to hold the bottle, which she would

not have broken for a thousand pounds (my lady thought less of killing ten men than breaking a saucer) and yet not let the liquor run from her flesh-pipe. She rapidly shifted her hold to the centre of the bottle, and worked it by means of the wrinkles in her proboscis to the bend of it. Then she griped it, and at the same time curled round her trunk into a sloping position and let the wine run down her throat. This done, she resumed the first position of her trunk, and worked the bottle back towards her finger, suddenly snapped hold of it by the neck, and handed it gracefully to me.

With this exception it was not her public tricks that astonished me most. The principle of all these tricks is one. An animal is taught to lay hold of things at command, and to shift them from one place to another. You vary the thing to be laid hold of, but the act is the same. In her drama, which was so effective on the stage, Djek did nothing out of the way. She merely went through certain mechanical acts at a word of command from her keeper, who was unseen or unnoticed, i.e., he was either at the wing in his fustian jacket, or on the stage with her in gimcrack and gold as one of a lot of slaves or courtiers or what not. Between ourselves, a single trick I have several times caught her doing on her own account proved more for her intelligence than all these. She used to put her eye to a keyhole. Ay, that she would, and so watch for hours to see what devil's trick she could do with impunity — she would see me out of the way and then go to work. Where there was no keyhole, I have seen her pick the knot out of a deal board, and squint through the little hole she had thus made.

A dog comes next to an elephant: but he is not up to looking through a keyhole, or a crack. He can think of nothing better than snuffing under the door.

At one place, being under a granary, she worked a hole in the ceiling, no bigger than a thimble, and sucked down sackfuls of grain before she was found out. Talk of the half-reasoning elephant: she seldom met a man that could match her in reasoning — to a bad end. Her weak points were her cruelty and cowardice, and by this latter Tom Elliot and I governed her with a rod of iron, vulgarly called a pitchfork. If a mouse pottered about the floor in her stable, Djek used to tremble all over, and whine with terror till the little monster was gone. A ton shaken by an ounce.

I have seen her start back in dismay from a small feather floating in the air. If her heart had been as stout as her will to do mischief was strong, mankind must have risen to put her down.

Almost all you have ever heard about the full-grown elephant's character is a pack of falsities. They are your servants by fear, or they are your masters. Two years ago an elephant killed his keeper at Liverpool or Manchester, I forget which. Out came the *Times:* he had pronged him six weeks before. How well I knew the old lie; it seldom varies a syllable. That man died, not because he had pronged the animal, but because he hadn't, or not enough.

Spare the pitchfork — spoil the elephant.

There is another animal people misconstrue just as bad.

The hyena.

Terrible fierce animal the hyena, says Buffon and Co.; and the world echoes the chant.

Fierce; are they? You get a score of them together in a yard, and you shall see me walk into the lot with nothing but a switch, and them try to get between the brick and the mortar with the funk, that is how fierce they are: and they are not only cowardly, but innocent,

and affectionate into the bargain is the fierce hyena of Buffon and Co. : but indeed wild animals are sadly misunderstood. It is pitiable : and those that have the best character deserve it less than those that have the worst.

In one German town I met with something I should like to tell the sporting gents, for I don't think there is many that ever fell in with such a thing. But it is an old saying that what does happen has happened before, and may again, so I tell this to put them on their guard, especially in Germany. Well, it was a good town for business, and we stayed several days: but before we had been there many hours my horses turned queer. Restless they were and uneasy. Sweated of their own accord. Stamped eternally. One in particular began to lose flesh. We examined the hay. It seemed particularly good, and the oats not amiss. Called the landlord in, and asked him if he could account for it. He stands looking at them: this one called Dick was all in a lather. "Well, I think I know now," said he; "they are bewitched. You see there is an old woman in the next street that bewitches cattle, and she rides on your horses' backs all night, you may take your oath." Then he tells us a lot of stories, whose cow died after giving this old wench a rough word, and how she had been often seen to go across the meadows in the shape of a hare. "She has a spite against me, the old sorceress," says he. "She has been at them; you had better send for the pastor." — "Go for the farrier, Jem," says I. So we had in the farrier. He sat on the bin and smoked his pipe in dead silence, looking at them. "They seem a little fidgety," says he, after about half an hour. So I turned *him* out of the stable. And I was in two minds about punching his head, I was. "Send for the veterinary surgeon No. 1." He came. "They have got some disorder," says he — "that is plain; nostrils are

clear, too. Let me see them eat." They took their food pretty well. Then he asked where we came from last. I told him. "Well," said he, cheerfully, "this is a murrain, I think. In this country we do invent a new murrain about every twenty years. We are about due now." He spoke English, this one, quite a fine gentleman. One of the grooms put in, "I think the water is poisoned." — "Anyway," says another, "Dick will die if we stay here." So then they both pressed me to leave the town. "You know, governor, we can't afford to lose the horses." Now I was clearing ten pounds a day in the place, and all expenses paid. So I looked blank. So did the veterinary. "I wouldn't go," says he, "wait a day or two: then the disease will declare itself, and we shall know what we are doing." You see, gents, he did not relish my taking a murrain out of his town, he was a veterinary. "Whatever it is," says he, "you brought it with you." — "Well, now," said I, "my opinion is, I found it here. Did you notice anything at the last place, Nick?" — "No," the grooms both bore me out. "Oh!" says the vet., "you can't go by that: it had not declared itself." Well, will you believe me (I often laugh when I think of it), it was not two minutes after he said that, that it did declare itself. It was Sunday morning, and Nick had got a clean shirt on. Nick was currying the very horse called Dick, when all of a sudden the sleeve of his white shirt looked dirty. "What now?" cries he, and comes to the light. "I do believe it is vermin," says he, "and if it is, they are eaten up with it." — "Vermin? What vermin can that be?" said I, "have we invented a new vermin too?" They were no bigger than pins' points, looked like dust on his shirt. "What do you say, sir? is it vermin?" — "Not a doubt of it," says the vet. "These are poultry-lice, unless I am mistaken. Have you any hens

anywhere near?" Both the grooms burst out, "Hens? why, there are full a hundred up in the hay-loft." So that was the murrain. The hens had been tumbling in the hay: the hay came down to the rack all alive with their vermin: and the vermin were eating the horses. We stopped that supply of hay; and what with currying, and washing with a solution the vet. gave us, we cured that murrain — chicken-pox, if any. We had a little scene at going away from this place. Landlord had agreed to charge nothing for the use of stabling; we spent so much in other ways with him. In spite of that he put it down at the foot of the list. I would not pay. "You must." — "I won't." — "Then you sha'n't go till you do;" and with that he and his servants closed the great gates. The yard was entered by two great double doors, like barn-doors, secured outside by a stout beam. So there he had us fast. It got wind, and there was the whole population hooting outside, three thousand strong. Then it was, "Come, don't be a fool."

"Don't you be a fool."

"Stand clear," said I to the man, "we will alter our usual line of march this time; I'll take Djek from the rear to the front." So they all formed behind me and Djek, two carriages and six horses, all in order. "Now," said I, "landlord, you have had your joke: open the door, and let us part friends; we have been with you a week, you know, and you have had one profit out of us, and another out of the townsfolk we brought to your bar — open the door."

"Pay me my bill, and I'll open," says he. "If I turned away one traveller from my stable for you, I've turned away twenty."

"A bargain is a bargain. Will you open? before she knocks your door into toothpicks."

"Oh! I'll risk my door if you'll risk your beast. No! I won't open till I am paid."

"Once, will you open?"

"No."

"Twice, will you open? — Thrice?"

"No."

"Djek — go!"

She walked lazily at the door as if she did not see it. The moment she touched it, both doors were in the road, the beam was in half in the road; most times one thing stands, another goes: here it all went bodily on all sides like paper on a windy day, and the people went fastest of all. There was the yell of a multitude under our noses, then an empty street under our eyes. We marched on calm, majestical, and unruffled, beneath the silent night.

Doors and bolts, indeed — to a lady that had stepped through a brick wall before that day, an English brick wall.

CHAPTER XII.

From Strasburg I determined to go into Switzerland: above all to Geneva — I could not help it; in due course of time and travel I arrived near Geneva, and I sent forward my green-and-gold avant-couriers. But alas! they returned with the doleful news that elephants were not admitted into that ancient city. The last elephant that had been there had done mischief, and, at the request of its proprietor, Mademoiselle Garnier, a young lady whose conscience smote her, for she had had another elephant that killed one or two people in Venice, was publicly executed in the fortress.[1]

[1] They gave this elephant an ounce of prussic acid and an ounce of arsenic: neither of these sedatives producing any effect, they fired a cannon-ball through her neck.

Fortunately (as I then thought), I had provided myself with testimonials from the mayor and governors of some score of towns through which we had passed. I produced these, and made friends in the town, particularly with a Dr. Mayo. At last we were admitted. Djek was proved a dove by such overpowering testimony. I had now paid M. Huguet six thousand francs, and found myself possessed of five thousand more. Business was very good in Geneva. Djek very popular. Her intelligence and amiability became a byword. I had but one bitter disappointment, though. Mademoiselle —— never came to see us, and I was too sulky and too busy to hunt for her. Besides, I said to myself, "All the world can find me, and if she cared a button for me she would come to light." I tried to turn it off with the old song, —

> "Now get ye gone, ye scornful dame,
> If you are proud, I'll be the same,
> I make no doubt but I shall find
> As pretty a girl unto my mind."

Behold me now at the climax of prosperity, dressed like a gentleman, driving a pair of horses, proprietor of a whole cavalcade, and of an elephant, and, after clearing all expenses, making at the rate of full six hundred pounds per annum. There was a certain clergyman of the place used to visit us about every day and bring her cakes and things to eat, till he got quite fond of her, and believed that she returned his affection. I used to beg him not to go so close to her; on this his answer was, "Why, you say she is harmless as a chicken," so then I had no more to say. Well, one unlucky day, I turned my back for a moment; before I could get back, there were the old sounds, a snort of rage, and a cry of terror, and there was the poor minister in her trunk. At sight

of me she dropped him, but two of his ribs were broken, and he was quite insensible, and the people rushed out in terror. We raised the clergyman and carried him home, and in half an hour a mob was before the door, and stones as big as your fists thrown in at the windows; this, however, was stopped by the authorities. But the next day my lady was arrested and walked off to the fortress, and there confined. I remonstrated, expostulated — in vain. I had now to feed her, and no return from her; ruin stared me in the face. So I went to law with the authorities. Law is slow, and Djek was eating all the time. Ruin looked nearer still. The law ate my green-and-gold servants and my horses, and still Djek remained in quod. Then I refused to feed her any longer; and her expenses fell upon the town. Her appetite and their poverty soon brought matters to a climax. They held a sort of municipal tribunal, and tried her for an attempt at homicide. I got counsel to defend her, for I distrusted my own temper and French.

I can't remember half the fine things he said, but there was one piece of common-sense I do remember; he said, "The animal I believe is unconscious of her great strength, and has committed a fatal error rather than a crime; still, if you think she is liable to make such errors, let her die rather than kill men. But how do you reconcile to your consciences to punish her proprietor, to rob him of his subsistence? *He* has committed no crime, *he* has been guilty of no want of caution. If, therefore, you take upon yourselves to punish the brute, be honest! buy her of the man first, and then assert your sublime office — destroy an animal that has offended morality. But a city should be above wronging or robbing an individual." When he sat down I thought my homicide was safe, for I knew Geneva could not afford to buy an elephant, without it was out of a Noah's ark.

But up gets an orator on the other side and attacked me; accused me of false representations, of calling a demon a duck. "We have certain information from France that this elephant has been always wounding and killing men up and down Europe these twenty years. Monsieur Lott knew this by universal report and by being an eye-witness of more than one man's destruction," — here there was a sensation, I can tell you. "He has, therefore, forfeited all claims to consideration." Then he thundered out, "Let no man claim to be wiser than Holy Writ; there we are told that a lie is a crime of the very deepest dye, and here we see how for years falsehood has been murder." Then I mind he took just the opposite line to my defender. Says he, "If I hesitate for a moment it is not for the man's sake, but for the brute's: but I do not hesitate. I could wish so majestic a creature might be spared for our instruction," says he, "that so wonderful a specimen of the Creator's skill might still walk the earth; but reason and justice and humanity say 'No.' There is an animal far smaller, yet ten times more important, for he has a soul; and this, the king of all the animals, is not safe while she lives: therefore she ought to die: weaker far than her in his individual strength, he is a thousand times stronger by combination and science, therefore she will die."

When this infernal chatterbox shut up, my heart sank into my shoes. He was a prig, but an eloquent one, and he walked into Djek and me till we were not worth half an hour's purchase.

For all that the council did not come to a decision on the spot, and I believe that if Djek had but been content to kill the laity as heretofore, we should have scraped through with a fine; but the fool must go and tear black cloth, and dig her own grave.

Two days after the trial, out came the sentence — death.

With that modesty and good feeling which belongs to most foreign governments, they directed me to execute their sentence.

My answer came in English. "I'll see you d——d and double d——d first, and then I won't."

Meantime Huguet was persecuting poor heart-sick me for the remainder of her purchase-money, and, what with the delay, the expenses and the anxiety, I was so down and so at the end of my wits and my patience that her sentence fell on me like a blow on a chap that is benumbed, produced less effect upon me at the time than it does when I think of it now.

Well, curse them, one fine morning they ran a cannon up to the gate, loaded it, and bade me call the elephant, and bring her into a favorable position for being shot. I refused point-blank in English as before. They threatened me for my contumacy. I answered, they might shoot me if they liked, but I would not be the one to destroy my own livelihood.

So they had to watch their opportunity.

It was not long of coming.

She began to walk about, and presently the poor fool marched right up to the cannon's mouth and squinted down it. Then she turned, and at last she crossed right before it. The gunner took the opportunity, applied his linstock and fired. There was a great tongue of flame and a cloud of smoke, and through the smoke something as big as a house was seen to go down; the very earth trembled at the shock.

The smoke cleared in a moment, and there lay Djek. She never moved: the round shot went clean through her body and struck the opposite wall with great force. It was wonderful and sad, to see so huge a creature robbed of her days in a moment by a spark. There she lay — poor Djek!

In one moment I forgot all her faults. She was an old companion of mine in many a wet day and dreary night. She was reputation to me, and a clear six hundred a year —and then she was so clever. We shall never see her like again, and there she lay. I mourned over her, right or wrong, and have never been the same man since that shot was fired.

The butchery done, I was informed by the municipal authorities that the carcass was considered upon the whole to be my property. The next moment I had two hundred applications for elephant-steaks from the pinch-gut natives, who, I believe, knew gravy by tradition and romances that had come all the way from Paris. Knives and scales went to work, and, with the tears running down my cheeks, I sold her beef at four sous per pound for about forty pounds sterling.

This done, all my occupation was gone. Geneva was no place for me, and, as the worthy Huguet, whose life I had saved, threatened to arrest me, I determined to go back to England and handicraft. Two days after Djek's death I was hanging sorrowfully over the bridge when some one drew near to me, and said in a low voice, "Monsieur Lott." I had no need to look up, I knew the voice; it was my lost sweetheart; she spoke very kindly, blushed, and welcomed me to her native country. She did more: she told me she lived five miles from Geneva, and invited me to visit her mother; she took occasion to let me know that her father was dead: "My mother refuses me nothing," she added, with another blush. This was all like a dream to me. The next day I visited her and her mother, and was cordially received: in short, it was made clear to me that my misfortune had endeared me to this gem of a girl instead of repelling her. An uncle too had died and left her three hundred pounds, and this made her bolder still, and she did

not conceal her regard for me. She told me she had seen me once in Geneva driving two showy horses in a carriage and looking like a nobleman, and so had hesitated to claim the acquaintance; but hearing the elephant's execution, and guessing that I could no longer be on the high road to fortune, she had obeyed her heart and been the first to remind me I had once esteemed her.

In short, a pearl.

I made her a very bad return for so much goodness. I went and married her. We then compounded with Huguet for three thousand francs, and sailed for England to begin the world again.

The moment I got to London, I made for the Seven Dials to see my friend Paley.

On the way I meet a mutual acquaintance, told him where I was going — red-hot.

He shook his head, and said nothing.

A chill came over me. If you had stuck a knife in me I shouldn't have bled. I gasped out some sort of inquiry.

"Why, you know he was not a young man," says he; and he looked down.

That was enough for such an unlucky one as me. I began to cry directly. "Don't ye take on," says he. "Old man died happy. Come home with me; my wife will tell you more about it than I can."

I was loath to go, but he persuaded me. His wife told me the old gentleman spoke of me to the last, and had my letters read out, and boasted of my success.

"Didn't I tell you he would rise?" he used to say, and then it seems he made much of some little presents I had sent him from Paris — and them such trifles compared with what I owed him; "Doesn't forget old friends now he is at the top of the tree," and then burst out praising me, by all accounts.

So then it was a little bit of comfort to think he had died while I was prosperous, and that my disappointment had never reached his warm and feeling heart.

A workman has little time to grieve outwardly. He must dry his eyes quickly, let his heart be ever so sad; or he'll look queer when Saturday night comes. You can't make a workman-like joint with the tear in your eye; one-half the joiners can't do it with their glasses on. And I was a workman once more; I had to end as I began.

I returned to the violin trade, and, by a very keen attention to its mysteries, I made progress, and having a foreign connection I imported and sold to English dealers, as well as made, varnished, and doctored violins. But soon the trade, through foreign competition, declined to a desperate state. I did not despair, but to eke out, I set my wife up in a china and curiosity shop in Wardour Street, and worked at my own craft in the back parlor. I had no sooner done this than the writers all made it their business to sneer at Wardour Street, and now nobody dares buy in that street, so since I began this tale we have closed the shop — it only wasted their time — they are much better out walking and getting fresh air at least for their trouble. I attend sales and never lose a chance of turning a penny; at home I make and mend and doctor fiddles — I carve wood — I clean pictures and gild frames. I cut out fruit and flowers in leather — I teach ladies and gentlemen to gild at so much a lesson; and by these and a score more of little petty arts I just keep the pot boiling.

I am, as I have been all my life, sober, watchful, enterprising, energetic, and unlucky.

In early life I played for a great stake — affluence.

I think I may say I displayed in the service of Djek

some of those qualities, by which, unless books are false, men have won campaigns and battles, and reaped fortunes and reputations. Result in my case — a cannon-shot fired in a dirty little village calling itself a city, in a country that Yorkshire could eat up and spit out again, after all the great kingdoms and repubs. had admired her and forgiven her her one defect — a tongue of fire — a puff of smoke — and the perils, labor, courage, and perseverance of eleven years blown away like dust to the four winds of heaven.

I am now playing for a smaller stake; but I am now as usual playing my very best. I am bending all my experience of work and trade, all my sobriety, activity, energy, and care, all my cunning of eye and hand, to one end — not to die in the workhouse.

Ladies and gentlemen, the workman has said his say, and I hope the company have been amused.

A HERO AND A MARTYR.

Upon the second day of October, 1856, the Glasgow *Times* told the world a moving story.

A little boy was drowning in the Clyde. There were a score of people on the bank; but they only groaned, and glared, and fluttered at the child's screams and struggles; not one had both the courage and the skill to plunge in and rescue him.

But presently came an elderly man who was a peerless swimmer and diver, and had saved more than forty lives in that very river.

Alas! he was now stone blind; a little girl, his granddaughter, was leading him by the hand.

Yet to him his blindness seemed no obstacle. "Let me to him! let me to him!" he cried, "I'll save him yet!"

But, in the general dismay and agitation, his appeal was unheeded at first. Then he screamed out in generous fury, "Ye daft fules, a mon disna soom wi' his een; just fling me in the water, and cry me *a* to him, and ye'll see."

His prayer would have been granted, but his granddaughter, with a girl's affection and unreasoning fears, clung round his knees, and screamed, "Na, na, ye wadna, — ye wadna!"

This caused a hesitation, when there was no longer a

moment to lose. The boy sank for the last time. A deep groan from the spectators told the sad end, and the poor blind hero went home flinging his arms about in despair, and crying like a child; for, as he afterwards said, in telling the lamentable tale, "It was a laddie flung away; clean flung away."

The chronicler went on to enumerate the gallant exploits of this very James Lambert, before he lost his sight; and the whole story set me thinking. I began to weigh the vulgar griefs of men against James Lambert's high distress. I taxed myself, and dissected things that had made me rage, or grieve; now they seemed small and selfish.

From that my mind went into books, and I fell to comparing the feats and the tears of James Lambert with the feats and tears of heroes, whom history has embalmed, or poetry canonized.

Strange to say, it was not my living contemporary, but the famous figures of poetry and history, that paled a little in this new crucible. I often detected some drawback to their valor, and a taint of egotism in their grief. This made me suspect that poetry, like its readers, may have been dazzled by the glare of armor and the blare of trumpets, and left heroic men unsung, who best deserved a bard. For, look below the surface — unsung Lambert's was the highest courage; it was solitary courage, and no trumpets to stir it; no armor, no joint enthusiasm; often no spectators. Summer and winter he plunged into the Clyde, and saved men and women, with his bare body, and at great peril to his life: for the best swimmer is a dead man if a drowning person clutches him and cripples him. And what was his reward on earth? For his benevolent courage he was stricken blind, through so many immersions of his heated body in icy water.

Was not this a poetic calamity, and a fit theme for tenderest verse ?

Being thus afflicted, for his virtue, he heard a fellow-creature drowning. He was potent as ever in the water, but impotent on land; and they would not help him into the water; and so a young life was flung away, that he could have saved; and he went home flinging his arms about in agony, and weeping tears that angels might be proud to dry with loving wing. Alas! and is it so? The eyes, that can no longer see, can weep.

A noble, rare, unselfish, and most poetical distress, though told in the plain prose of a journal. It made me desire to see this James Lambert, and hear his tale from his own lips, and give him my poor sympathy.

But, unfortunately, I am a procrastinator. Of course I can do unadvisable things expeditiously; but, when a wise or good thing is to be done, "*nonum prematur in annum*" is my motto. So, for ten mortal years, and more, I was always going — going — going — to visit James Lambert.

At last, after many years, being in Selkirkshire, I shook off "the thief of time," and went into Glasgow to see this man, a hero in his youth, a martyr in old age.

But I had lived long enough to observe that, when you seek a man who was alive and elderly twelve years ago, you find he has been dead from four to seven. So, on the road to Glasgow, I blamed myself bitterly for my besetting sin, and actually said to myself very earnestly, —

> "—— from this moment
> The very firstlings of my heart shall be
> The firstlings of my hand."

That was fine; only, not to deceive you, I had often repeated this high resolve, with great fervor and sincerity, and then gone on procrastinating.

In Glasgow I made strict inquiries after James Lambert; I asked the landlord, and all the waiters; went to every tradesman I knew in the city. Not one soul had ever heard of him, nor of his exploits. This confirmed my fear that he had gone to a better world, whilst I was busy postponing here below. However, my tardy blood was up at last; so I took a cab, and drove to the police chambers, and asked for the chief. The request I had to make was unusual; therefore I prefaced the matter after this fashion — "Sir, most people come here to ask you to find out some malefactor. I come hunting an honest man and a man of great merit, one James Lambert who saved many lives in the Clyde, years ago. I have come from England to find him, and I can hear nothing of him, alive or dead. If you will assist me with your machinery, I shall be truly obliged to you."

Now they say the Scotch are not so quick to take a new idea as the English. That may be; but they are also not so quick to reject one. An English chief constable would probably have said at once, "That is quite out of our line; you should go to the parochial clergy;" but after twenty minutes' discussion would have relented, and given me every assistance: the Scottish chief, on the contrary, though manifestly taken aback, thought before he spoke; thought, without disguise, for full thirty seconds. "Well, sirr," said he, very slowly, "I see — no — objection — to thaat." Then he turned to a tube and said, in a hollow voice, "Send me a detective."

This done, he took down my name, and address in Glasgow, and what I knew about James Lambert.

One's idea of a detective is — a keen, lean man, with little glittering eyes — a human weasel. The door opened, and in walked a model of strength and youthful beauty, that made me stare. He was about twenty-two years old, at least six feet four in height, and the

breadth and, above all, the depth of his chest, incredible. Until I saw John Heenan strip, and reveal his bulging back and breast, and every inch of his satin skin mapped with muscles, I took for granted the old sculptors had exaggerated, and carved ideal demigods, not real men. Nude Heenan showed me they had not exaggerated, but selected; and this detective confirmed the proof; for he was a much finer man than Heenan, yet not a bit fleshy: and, instead of a prizefighter's features, a comely, manly, blooming face, and a high, smooth forehead, white as snow itself. I know no lady in the South with a forehead more white and delicate.

This Hercules-Apollo — his Scotch name I have forgotten — stood at the door, and, drawing himself up, saluted his chief respectfully.

"——," said the chief, "this is Mr. Redd, fr' England. He is looking for an old man named Lambert, that saved many lives in the Clyde some years ago. Ye'll take means to find him — here's his description — and ye'll report to Mr. Redd at his hotel. Ye understand now; *he's to be found* — if he is alive."

The detective saluted again, but made no reply. He took my address, and the particulars, and went to work directly, as a matter of course. I thanked the chief heartily, and retired to my hotel.

About nine in the evening, Detective Hercules-Apollo called on me. All he had *detected* was a brave man, called John Lambert, that had saved lives out of a burning ship in the port of Greenock. I declined John Lambert — with thanks.

Having now no serious hope of finding James Lambert alive, I took the goods the gods provided, and interviewed Hercules-Apollo, since he was to hand. I questioned him, and he told me he was often employed in captures.

"Well," said I, "you are the man for it. You don't often meet your match, eh?"

He blushed a little, and smiled, but it did not make him bumptious, as it might a small man, say a lifeguardsman, or drayman. He said, "I assure you, sirr, I need it all, and whiles, mair." He then pointed out to me a window in the Trongate, exactly opposite the room we were in. "Yon's just a nest o' theeves," said he: "they wark wi' decoys, sirr, a wife wi' a tale o' woe, or a lass wi' a bonny face, and the like. The other night a gentleman put his hand through the window, and cried 'Thieves!' So I ran up the stair. The door was lockit, ye may be sure. I just pit my fut till't" —

"And it flew up the chimney?"

"Ha! ha! No so far as that, sirr. Aweel, I thoucht to find maybe two or three of them; but there were nigh a dizen o' the warst characters in Glasgow. However, I was in for't, ye ken; so I was in the middle of them before they had time to think, and collared twa old offenders. 'I'll tak this handful,' says I, 'and I'll come back for the lave' [b]: marched 'em oot, and the gentleman at my heels. He was glad to wend clear, and so was I. My hairt beat hard that time, I shall assure ye; but I didna let the vagabonds see *thaat*, ye ken." He intimated that it was all gas for any one man to pretend he could master half a dozen, if they were resolute. "Na — we beer the law in our hairts, and they beer guilt in theirs. That's what makes the odds, sirr."

After a conversation, of which this is only a fragment, we returned to James Lambert, and he told me he expected news, good or bad, by break of day, for he had fifty policemen questioning on their beats, in the likeliest parts of the city. "Ah," said I, "but I am afraid those beats are all above ground; now my poor hero is underground."

I went to bed with this conviction; and having hitherto blamed myself, which is an unnatural trick, I now looked round for somebody else to blame, which is customary and wholesome; and herein my smattering of the British drama stood my friend; I snarled, and said — out of Sir Peter — "He has died on purpose to vex me."

I heard no more till half-past one next day, and then my gigantic and beautiful detective called. This time he had a huge pocket-book — enormous — in a word, such a pocket-book as he a man. He opened it, and took out an old newspaper with an account of James Lambert, and also a small pamphlet. I ran my eye over them.

"That will be the man, sirr?"

"Yes."

"Aweel, then we've got him," said he, quietly.

"What! got him alive?"

"Ou ay; he is in vara good health. He's not an old man, sirr. He will not be mair than saxty."

"Have you seen him with your own eyes?" said I, still half incredulous.

"Ye may be sure o' thaat, sirr. I wadna come here till I had spoken him. He stays at No. 36 Little Street, Calton."

I thought Calton was some other town, but he told me it was only a suburb of Glasgow, and all the cabmen knew it. Then I thanked him for his zeal and ability, and stood a sovereign, which he received with a grateful smile, but no abatement of his manly dignity; and I took a fly that moment, and drove to Little Street, Calton.

For some reason No. 36 was hard to find, and I got out of the fly to explore. I found the population in a flutter, and it was plain by the swift gathering of

juveniles, and their saucer eyes, that this was the first triumphal car had entered that miserable street. However, if there was amazement, there was civility; and they vied with each other in directing me to James Lambert. I mounted a stair, as directed, and knocked at a door. A woman's voice said, "Come in," and I entered the room. There was but one.

On my right hand as I stood at the door, and occupying nearly one-third of the room, was a long large wooden machine for spinning cotton; the upper part bristled with wooden quills polished by use. Behind it the bed in a recess. Immediately on my left was a table with things on it, covered with a linen cloth. Exactly opposite me the fireplace. On *my* right hand of it the window, but in an embrasure.

An old woman sat before the window, a young woman sat all in a heap the other side of the fire; and in front of the fire stood a gray-headed man, with well-cut features, evidently blind. He was erect as a dart, and stood before his own fire in an easy and gentleman-like attitude, which does not, as a rule, belong to workingmen; they generally slouch a bit when not at work.

"Does Mr. Lambert live here?" said I, for form.

He replied civilly, "I am James Lambert. What is your wull with me?"

"Mr. Lambert, I have come from some distance to have a talk with you — about your exploits in saving lives."

"Aweel, sirr, I'll be very happy to hae a crack wi' ye. Wife, give the *gentleman* a chair."

When I was seated, he said, "We are in a litter the day; but ye'll excuse it."

I saw no litter, and did not know what he meant. Before he could explain, a young man called for him, no doubt by appointment; and Lambert begged me to

excuse him for a moment; he had a weekly pension, and they would not pay it after three o'clock; but it was not far, and he would return directly. He then left me seated between the two women. I looked hard at the young woman. She never moved, and seemed quite stupid or stupefied. I looked at the table on her side of the room, and wondered what was under the linen cloth. There seemed to be a prominence or two, such as objects of unequal height would cause, and I fancied it must be the best teapot, and other china, covered to keep off the dust.

The young woman was repellent, so I turned round to the old one, and praised her husband.

"Ay," said she, "he has been a curious mon in his time — and mony a great faitour[c] he did — and mony a good suit he destroyed that *I* had to pay for."

This last sentence being uttered earnestly, and its predecessor apathetically, coupled with the stress on the "I," gave me the measure of the woman's mind. However, I tried her again. "Did you see any of his exploits?"

"Na, na; I was aye minding my wark at hame. I saw leetle o' his carryings on."

I said no more; but remembered Palissy's wife, and other egotistical mediocres; and turned to the young woman: but she seemed unconscious of my voice or my presence.

From this impenetrable I turned, in despair, to the covered table; tried to see below the cover with my eagle eye, and had just settled positively it was the china tea-service, when, to my great relief, James Lambert returned, and conversation took the place of idle speculation.

We soon came to an understanding, and I asked him to give me some details, and to begin at the beginning.

"Aweel, sirr," said he, "the first case ever I had was a baker — they ca't a case ye ken the noo; aw thing is a case — an awfu' fat mon he was. I was aboot fourteen or fifteen then, but a gey guid soomer [d]. Aweel, sirr, me and Rab Rankin, and John Murdoch, and a hantle mair lads, went doon to the bathing-place, an' we were divairting oorselves in the water, when the baker strips and comes out on the deal. Noo ye'll understond there was shallow water and deep, and the deep was at the far eend o' the deal. They ca' it 'the Dominie's Hole,' fra a schulemaister wha was drooned there a hundre' years agone. So this baker comes oot to the vera eend o' the deal, and dives in heed first, as if Clyde belanged to him — ha, ha, ha! He dizna come up for awhile, and I said to the other callants [e], 'Hech, sirs, ye'll see a bonny diver.' Presently up he comes, paanting and baashing, and flinging his arrms; then doon he goes again with baith een glowering. 'Mairey on us,' cries ane, 'the mon's drooning.' However, he comes up again, baashing and spluttering. I was ready for him, and just swam forereicht him, and took him by th' arm. That will let ye see what a senseless cauf I was. I suld hae gone and flung him ae eend of my gallows, or my naepkin [f], and towed him in; but, insteed of that, he gat haud o' me and grippit me tight to his breest, and took me doon with him. Noo, tell me, sir — y' are a soomer yoursel?"

I said, "Yes."

"What was our lives worth, the pair? Him a twanty stane mon, and me a laddy?"

"Not much, indeed, unless you could slip away from him."

"Ay, but I could na; he huggit me till him. Aweel, sirr, if he was wild, I was desperate. I flang my heed back and gat my knees up to his breest, and after my

knees my feet, and I gied the awfu'est spang with my feet against his breest, and I got clear, a' but the skin 'o my forefinger, that I left in his hond. I raised to the surface and called to the boys to mak' a chain. I was afeared to dive for him. But by Gude's mairey he came up yance mair, just to tak' leave o' Scoetland. I got ahint him and gave him a sair crack on the heed, drove him forud, followed him up wi' a push, and then the lads took hands and won to him, and pulled him to the deal, and I soomed ashore, and I hadna been there a minute when I swooned reicht away."

"How was that?" I asked.

"I think it was partly the pain, but maistly faint-hairtedness at sight o' my finger a-streaming wi' bluid, and the skin away. When I came to mysel' the baker had put on his claes and gaed awa."

"What, without a word to his preserver?"

"Ay."

"Didn't he give you anything?"

"Deil a bawbee. But there was two gentlemen saw the affair, and gied me fifteen shellin'. I went hame sucking my sair finger; and my mither gied me an aw-fu' hiding for spoiling my clothes. She took me by the lug *g*, and made me cry 'murrder.'"

"Fine, sympathetic creatures, the women in these parts," said I; *circumferens acriter oculos*, as my friend Livy hath it, and withering a female right and left, as playful men shoot partridges. Unfortunately, neither of them observed I had withered her: the hero's narrative and my basilisk glances were alike unheeded.

"And on the impassive ice the lightnings play."—*Pope.*

James Lambert, duly questioned, then related how a personal friend of his had been seized with cramp in the middle of the Clyde. "For, sirr," said he, "the Clyde

is a deedly water, by reason of its hot and cold currents, and sand-holes and all."

His friend had sunk for the last time; James Lambert dived for him, and brought him up from the bottom, and took him ashore.

"And, sirr, maybe ye wadna think it; but the resoolt was — I lost my freend."

"What do you mean?" said I, staring.

"He just avoided me after that. He came to see me twarree h times, too; but I obsairved he wasna easy till he was away; and bymby I saw nae mair o' the lad." This he said without passion, and apparently only to discharge his conscience, as a faithful narrator of real events, and men as they are in life, not books. But I, who am no hero, boiled.

I took time to digest this human pill, and then questioned him. But I omit two cases — to use his own words — as they had no particular feature.

"The next case, sir, was an old wumman; ye ken the wives come on Glasgow Green to wash. Well, this auld wife had gone oot at 'the three stanes' to dip her stoop i' the water, and overbalanced herself and gone in heed first, and the stream carried her oot. The cry got up, 'there's a wumman droonin.' I was a lang way off, but I heerd it, and ran down and into the water after her, clothes and all. She was floating, sirr, but her heed was doon, and her feet up. I never saw the like in a' my life. I soomed up to her, and lifted her puir auld gray heed out o' the water — a rale riverend face she had — and broucht her ashore on my arm as quiet as a lamb; and laid her doon."

"Was she insensible?"

"Not athegither, I think, but nigh hand it, just scared like oot o' her senses, puir saul. Vera sune she began to tremble all over and greet sair. I turned my bock,

no' to greet mysel', and went aside and ridded my claes. Aweel, sirr, the first word she spoke was to speer for me. She cries out, quite sudden, 'Whaur's the mon that gat me oot; for Gude's sake, whaur is he?' Sae the folk pushit me, and I behooved to come forrud, and mak' my confession. 'Wife,' says I, 'I'm the mon.' So she looks me all over. 'The Lorrd protect ye,' she cried. 'The Lorrd bless ye!—I'm a puir auld body,' says she, "I hae naething but my washing-bay *i*. But come ye wi' me; and I'll pit it away, and get ye twarree shellin' for saving me fra deeth.'"

"Hech, sirr, I felt it awfu' keen; it was just her livelihood, ye ken, her washing-bay; and she'd pit it i' pawn for me. 'Puir auld body,' says I, 'and is that a' ye hae?' And I just clappit a shellin' in her hand, and I tell't her I needed naething; I'd a gude wife, and a gude wage. I was warking at Somerville's mill ower the water. 'And,' says I, 'if ye wait for me Saturday afternoons, when I lift my wage, I'll whiles hae a shellin' for ye.'"

"And did she?"

"Na, na," said he; then, thoughtfully, "She was ower puir to gie, and ower decent to take."

All our other provincial dialects are harsh and ugly; but the Scotch is guttural on the consonants, and on the vowels divinely melodious: I wish I could convey the exquisite melody of James Lambert's voice in speaking these words, "Puir — auld — body! an' is thaat a' ye hae?"

The story itself, and the brave, tender hero's tones were so manly, yet so sweet, that they brought water into my eyes; and I thought this tale at least must touch some chord even in the dull, domestic heart. But no; I looked at the young woman, and she sat all of a heap, still wrapped in herself, dull, stupid, and gloomy

beyond description, and the narrative, far from touching her, never even reached her. That was evident, somehow. Thought I to myself, "Oh, but y'arr a dour wife, y' arr."

Perhaps you will be incredulous at my thinking in Scotch; but the truth is, I am little better than a chameleon; I take the local color willy nilly. After a day in France I begin to think in French; in Scotland, Scotch. I think in bad French and bad Scotch — very; but that is a flimsy detail; the broad fact remains. So I dubbed her a "dour *i* wife:" and really I felt wrath that such pearls of true narrative should be poured out before young Apathy and ancient Mediocrity.

Of Mediocrity there is no cure; but there is of Apathy, at least in Scotland. That cure is — whiskey. When whiskey will not thaw a Scotch body at all,

"O then be bold to say Bassanio's — *dead*."

So I beckoned a dirty but attentive imp, that gleamed, all eyes, in a dark corner, and sent him out for a great deal of whiskey; and postponed my inquiries till after the thaw.

But, before the imp could return with Apathy's cure, several footsteps were heard on the stairs, and three or four men entered, all in good black suits. A few words of subdued greeting passed, and then they removed the white linen cloth from what I, with my eagle eye and love of precision, had inventoried as the best tea-service.

It was the body of a little girl, lying in her little coffin. The lid was not yet on. She looked like frozen wax.

After the first chilling surprise, I cast my eye on the young woman. She never moved nor looked, but she shivered by the fire when the men touched the coffin behind her.

She was the dead child's mother. Even I — in spite of my eagle eye — could see that now.

I whispered to James Lambert, "I have intruded on you at a sad time."

"Ye haena intruded at all," said he out loud. Then he told me, before them all, what made it worse was that the father had gone away and not been seen these three days.

"Ay, but," said Mrs. Lambert, "ye mauna let the gentleman think he is ane that drinks. Na, he is a real quiet, sober, decent man."

"He is thaat," said the bereaved mother, speaking for the first time, but in a crushed and dogged way.

"I'm no' exackly denying that," said James, cautiously. "But whaur is he — *at the present time?*"

It was evident that this quiet, sober, decent man, upon the death of his daughter, had gone away on the fuddle, and left his bereaved wife to bury the child how she could.

Such are the dire realities of life, especially among the poor.

With what different eyes I looked now on the poor creature, bereaved mother, and deserted wife, whose deep and numbing agony I had taken for sullen apathy — with my eagle eye.

And now came in an undertaker, and the coffin-lid was to be screwed on. Before this was done, all the men, myself included, took a last look at her who was taken away so early from the troubles of the world.

"Ay, sir," said the undertaker to me, "it is just clay going to the dust;" and never was a truer word nor more pictorial. That clay seemed never to have lived.

The lid was soon screwed down, and then, to my surprise, the undertaker delivered a prayer. Now that was the business of the minister: and besides, the under-

taker had the reddest nose I ever saw. For all that he delivered a grave, feeling, and appropriate prayer, and then the deceased was carried out for interment, and I was left with James Lambert, his daughter, and his wife. I asked James Lambert, would not the minister meet them at the grave.

"Na," said he, "there's nae minister intill't. The wives daur na tell him, or he'd be speering, 'Why is na the gude man here?' and then he'd get a pooblic rebuke. Whisper, sirr. Hae ye no absairved that the women-folk aye screens a blackguard?"

"Yes," whispered I; "especially when they suffer by him."

So the poor wife let her child be prayed over and buried by a layman, sooner than expose her husband to the censure of the church.

All this made my bowels yearn, and, for the first time, I addressed myself directly to her. I said, "My poor woman, nobody can console a mother that has lost a child: that is beyond the power of man. But, if it is a part of your trouble that you are left without help, and perhaps hard put to it for expenses, I can be of some little use to you in that." Then I pulled out two or three of those deplorable old rags — Scotch one-pound notes, by means of which the national malady is perpetuated and passes from hand to hand.

I don't know whether it was the stale words or the old rags, or both; but the poor woman burst out crying and sobbing with almost terrible violence.

We did what we could for her, and tried to get her to swallow a few drops of whiskey; but she put her hand up and turned away from it.

The quick-eared old man found this out somehow, and explained her to her face. "She can take a drap as weel as ony body: but noo, she blames it for her mon

being away." Then, rather roughly to his wife, "Hets, ye fule, let the lass greet. What'n harm will that dee her?"

Soon after this the two women exchanged one of their signals, and went out together — I think to pay the undertaker; and such is the decent pride of the Scotch character, that to be able to do this was probably a drop of comfort in the bitter cup of their affliction.

When they were gone, the old man's expressive features brightened a little, and he drew his stool nearer me, with a certain genial alacrity. There are book-makers who would not let you know that, madam, lest you should turn from their hero with aversion; but, when I deal with fact, I am on my oath. At all events, understand him before you turn from him. You see the present very clearly, the past through a haze; but this man, being blind, could not see the present at all, and saw the past clearer than you do; for he was compelled to live in it. He had never seen the grandchild he had lost; an unfamiliar fragment of this generation had gone away to the grave, a man of his own generation sat beside him, and led him back to the men and things he knew by sight and by deed.

"Well, Mr. Lambert — now tell me."

"Aweel, sirr, ye've heerd o' the callant they wadna let me save — hech, sirr, yon was a wean wastit [k] — noo I'll mak' ye the joodge whether I could na hae saved that ane, and twarree mair. There's a beck they ca' 'the Plumb' rins doon fra' the horse-brae into the Clyde near Stockwell Brigg. The bairns were aye for sporting in the beck, because it was shallow by ordinar, and ye'd see them the color o' vilets, and no' hauf sae sweet, wi' the dye that ran i' the beck. Aweel, ae day there was a band o' them there; and a high spate [l] hed come doon and catched them, and the resoolt was I saw ane o' th'

assembly in the Clyde. I had warned the neer-do-weels, ye ken, mony's the time. By good-luck, I was na far away, and went in for him and took him by the ear. 'C'way, ye little deevil,' says I. I had na made three strokes, when I'm catched round the neck wi' another callan."

"Where on earth did he spring from?"

"I dinna ken. I was attending to number ane, when number twa poppit up, just to tak' leave o' Glasgwo. I tell't them to stick in to me, and carried the pair ashore. Directly, there's a skirl on the bank, and up comes number three, far ahint me in the Clyde, and sinks before I can win *m* to him. Dives for this one, and has a wark to find him at the bottom. Brings him ashore, in a kind o' a dwam; but I had nae fear for his life, he hadna been doon lang: my lord had a deal mair mischief to do, ye ken. By the same token he came to vera sune; and d'ye ken the first word he said to me?"

"No."

"Nay, but guess."

"I cannot."

"He said, 'Dinna tell my feyther!' ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! 'Lordsake, man, dinna tell my feyther!' ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!"

I never saw a man more tickled, by a straw, than James Lambert was at this. By contemplating him I was enabled, in the course of time, to lose my own gravity; for his whole face was puckered with mirth, and every inch of it seemed to laugh.

"But," said he, "wad you believe it, some officious pairson tell't his feyther, in spite o' us baith. He was just a laboring man. He called on me, and thankit me vara hairtily, and gied me a refreshment. And I thoucht mair o't than I hae thoucht o' a hantle siller on the like occasions."

After one or two savings that would have gained a man a medal in the South, but go for nothing in this man's career, and would dilute the more colored incidents, James Lambert prefaced a curious story by letting me into his mind. "By this time, sirr," said he, "I was aye prowling about day and night for vectims."

"Tell the truth, James. You had the pride of an artist. You wanted them to fall in, that you might pull them out, and show your dexterity."

"Dinna mak' me waur than I am, ha! ha! ha! Nay, but ye ken, in those days, folk was na sae acquainted in sooming, and accidents was mair common; and sae, if such a thing was to be, I wad like to be there and save 'em. Ech, the sweetness o't! — the sweetness o't!

"I raised every morning between three and four, and took a walk; it was a kind o' my natur, and the river was aye the first place I ran tae. Aweel, ae morning, before 'twas well light, I heerd high words, and there was a lass fleichting *n* on a lad, and chairging him wi' beein' her ruin: and presently she runs away skirling, and flings hersel' into the river. The lad he just turns on his heel and walks away."

I expressed my surprise and horror — no matter in what terms.

He replied, loftily, "My dear sirr, d'ye ken this? there have been men in the name o' men, that were little mair than broom besoms."

I acquiesced.

"'Twas na for sport neither. The lass knew the water, and ran straicht to the deepest pairt, opposite Nelson's Monument: her claes buoyed her up, and I got her out easy eneuch. She was na ashore a moment, when in she flees again, the daft hizzy. Noo the water maistly cools thir sort o' lasses, and reconciles them to terree firmee. But she was distrackit, she was just a woman that wanted

to die. So I went in again, and lectured her a' the time I was pulling her oot. 'Hae ye a quarrl wi' Him that made ye, ye daft cummer?' o says I; and I held her on the bank itsel'; but if I was strong in the water, she was stronger on land wi' her daftness, and she flung me off, and in again. 'Vara weel, my leddy,' says I. Sae — d'ye ken what I did noo?"

"No."

"I just drooned her. I pit her heed under water, and keepit there till I made her taste the bitterness o' dethe, for her gude, ye ken. Hech, sirr, but it sickened her o' yon game. She brought up a quart o' Clyde, and then she lay and rolled a bit, and pu'd the grass, and then she sat up quite as a lamb; and I stood sentinel over her leddyship, and my claes a-drippin'. By this time a wheen folk cam' aboot to see, and doesna the lad, that was wi' her, step forrud and complain to me. 'Ye'd little to do to interfere,' says he; 'she was wi' me; she was na wi' you.' — 'What,' says I, 'd'ye begroodge the lass her life?' — 'Not I,' says he; 'but y' had no need to meddle; what's your business?' So I gied him his answer. Says I, 'You have taen her character, and turned her on the mairey of the warld, and noo it's a' your vexation that ye could na' be rid of her in the Clyde. But she shall outlive you, ye blackguard,' says I, 'please Gude.' So then he challenged me to fight. But as I mad ready to take off my coat, a fine lad steps forrud, and lays his hand on my arm. 'Ye're no fit for him,' says he; 'an' ye've done your wark,' says he, 'and this is mines.' So at it they went, and t'other stood up and fought for about five minutes. But oh, he napped it. My lad just hashed him. Gied him twa black een, and at the hinder end laid him sprawlin' and smothered i' bluid."

"But the woman?"

"She was na a woman. She was but a lassie, about nineteen."

"Little fool! and thought she was ruined for life — when all her life was before her."

"Ye may say that, sirr: why, that very year wasna she married on a decent tradesman? I often saw her after she was married; but she wadna speak to me. She couldna look me straught i' the face. She'd say 'Gude morning,' though — when she couldna get by me."

"Ungrateful little brute!"

"Na, na; it was na ingratitude ava; it was just shame. Aweel, she needna run fra' me noo; for I canna see her, nor ony of those I hae saved."

This made me gulp a bit, and, when I had done, I said, "She measured you by her small self. She would have been sure to blab, in such a case, so she thought you would."

"Aweel then," said he, "she was mistaen; for I maun tell ye that some mischief-maker let on something or other about it to her man, and he was uneasy, and came and asked me if 'twas true I had taken his wife out o' the water. 'Ay,' said I, 'her and twarree mair.' — 'What had she to do i' the water?' says he. 'That's her business,' says I, 'mine was to tak' her oot.' He questioned me had she been drinking. 'Like eneuch,' says I, 'but I couldna say.' He questioned me, and questioned me; but I pit the collar on, ye ken. I behooved to clear the wife a' I could. I didna lee neither; but I was afflickit wi' a sooden obleevion o' sma' parteeculars, haw! haw! I dinna think muckle o' yon carle. He had a rare gude wife; they a' said so, and whaur was the sense o' him diving into her past life, to stir the mud?"

Passing over an easy job or two, and a few melancholy cases in which he had dived and groped the river, and restored dead bodies to their friends, I come now to a passage, which but for its truth I should hesitate to

relate exactly as he told it me; but, if I were to yield to squeamishness and slur it, a chapter of human nature, revealed to me, would by me be meanly carried to my grave and hidden from the scholars of other ages and nations.

Thus, then, it was: James Lambert was bathing in the Clyde one evening at the hour when it was allowed at that epoch.

Suddenly, Mrs. Cooper, that kept the Society's house, cried to him over the window, "Rin, Jamie Lambert, there is a laddie in the water."

Up ran James Lambert, but the boy had sunk. A bystander directed him to the place; but it is not so easy to mark the exact spot where a body has disappeared in the water; and James Lambert dived twice, and came up without the child. He dived a third time, and groped along the bottom. He was down so long that the cry got up he was drowned too. Others scouted the idea. James Lambert drown! They had known him cross the Clyde, under the water, from bank to bank. Some time having elapsed since the first alarm, people had poured across the green, and down the banks, and there was quite a crowd there murmuring and gazing, when up came James Lambert, panting, with the child in his arms.

There was a roar of exultation at the sight, but James Lambert did not hear it, and did not see the crowd. (Take note of that fact.) His whole soul was in the lovely boy, that lay white and inanimate in his arms. He ran into the house, uttering cries of concern.

"But when I got him in the hoose, he opens ae eye on me — like a bonny blue bead it was. Eh! I was happy; I was happy. I gied the bonny bairn a kiss and hands him to the wife, and orders her to the fire wi' him. Then I'm going oot, when a' of a soodden I find I haena

a steek on me, and twa hundred folk about the door. Wad ye believe it, *wi' the great excitement I never knew I was nakit,* till I saw the folk, and bethought me. I rins back again, and at the stair-foot, there's a bundle o' linen. I was na lang happing mysel', I can tell ye, and oot I comes as bold as brass, in the wife's apron and a muckle sheet. The sight o' me made the lasses scairt and skirl *p*; for I was like a corp just poppit oot o' the grave. I went for my clothes, and — they were away. My bluid gat up at that, and I chackit them sair. 'Hech,' says I, 'ye maun be a cauld-hairted set o' thieves,' says I, 'to tak' my very claes, when I was doing a mon's pairt.' Bymby *q* I sees a young leddy in a silk gown, wagging on me *r*, and she points to a hedge near by. So I went, and there were my claes. She hed put them aside for me, ye ken, and keepit her ee on them. Wasna that thouchtful o' her noo ?"

"It was, indeed."

"Aweel, sirr, I got my things on at the hedge, an' tied up the wife's bundle, and cam' forrud: and by this time the folk was dispairsed like. But the same young leddy was walking to and fra, with her een doon, reflecking like. She wagged on me, and I came to her. So she askit me who I was, and I tell't her I was a cotton-spinner, and they caed me James Lambert. So she lookit at me full, and says she, 'James, are ye married ?' — 'Oh, yes, ma'am,' says I, 'this three years.' So she lookit me all over, in a vara curious way; and she says saftly, 'James — it is — a — great — pity — yere married — for yere a vara — gallant — man.' So ye see, sirr, I could hae had a young leddy — for her ee tell't me mair nor her words — if I had na had the wife. But then I'd no hae had the wife. So it comes a' to the same thing."

I stared at him with surprise, for to me it did not

seem quite the same thing to marry high sympathy, swift intelligence, and plenty of money, and to marry poverty plus grovelling mediocrity. However, it was not for me to satirize conjugal affection and its amiable delusions. But I proposed the young lady's health, and we drank it cordially.

By this time I conclude I have so spoiled the readers of James Lambert, that they will care for no passage of his extraordinary career that does not offer some new feature. So I go from water to the double peril of ice and water at the freezing point.

"It was a hard winter; and I had chairge o' the gentlemen belonging to the skating club. So I had to go to Hugginfield Loch. But I was clean wastit there. I was armed wi' ladders an' ropes, and corks. Mon, ony fule can stand and fling gear till a drooning body. And I gat an awfu' affront intil the bargain; they castit in my teeth that I was partial, and saved the rich afore the poor. Noo I let naebody droon, but my bargain was with the club to save them *first;* so I behooved to keep to the contract. Aweel then, I did nae execution worth speaking o'; the thing I'm coming tae was at the bend of the Clyde, they ca' 'the peat bog.' A number was skating on the river, and the ice began to heave an' shake wi' the high tide. So I chased all the boys aff wi' my belt, and warned the men: but some folk winna be warned by me. The ice breaks under a laboring man, and in he goes, and the tide sucked him under in a moment. I ran to the place as fast as I could, and under the ice after him. Aweel, I soomed, and soomed, and did na catch him. I soomed, and soomed, ay, hoping to find him, till I had nae chance to come back alive if I did na turn. But, just as I turned, my feet struck him. Then my hairt got up again, and I grippit him, and I dragged him back wi' me, and soomed and soomed for my ain life the noo,

as weel as his. Eh, mon, I was amaist gane. But I wadna lose him. 'Twas baith live, or baith dee. I'm just givin' in, when I see the light o' the hole, and mak' for't, and get him oot and on to the ice, and dizna it keep breaking direckly with the pair o' us, and sae we go floonderin' and smashing, till we are helpit ashore. Noo I'll tell ye a farce. I'm haulding the chiel prisoner by the collar, and shaking t'other neif's at them a'. Ye ken I wanted to fleicht on them, for saying I riskit myself mair for the rich than the puir. But a' I could say was, 'Wow — wow — wow;' the brethe wadna come back to my body. And while I was 'wow — wow — wowing' at them, and gripin' my coptive like a molly-factor, dizna he turn roond and thank me in a brief discoorse vara ceevil. Eh, mon, I glowered at him; I loosed him, an' rolled away backards to glower at him. He could hae repeated his catecheesm, and I could only baash an' blather. The man was a better man than me; for he had been langer in. Oh, I declared that on the bank, sune as ever I could speak."

I come now to the crowning feat of this philanthropic and adventurous life; and I doubt my power to describe it. I halt before it, like one that feels weak, and a mountain to climb; for such a feat, I believe, was never done in the water by mortal man, nor ever will again while earth shall last.

James Lambert worked in Somerville's mill. Like most of the hands, he must cross the water to get home. For that purpose, a small ferry-boat was provided; it lay at a little quay near the mill. One Andrew had charge of it ashore, and used to shove it off with a lever, and receive it on its return. He often let more people go into it than Lambert thought safe, and Lambert had remonstrated, and had even said, "Ye'll hae an occident some day that ye'll rue but ance, and that will be a' your

life." Andrew, in reply, told him to mind his own business.

Well, one evening James Lambert wanted to get away in the first boat-load. This was somehow connected with his having bought a new hat: perhaps he wished to avoid the crowd of workpeople — here I am not very clear. However, he watched the great wheel, and the moment it began to waver, previous to stopping, he ran for his hat, and darted down the stairs. But, as he worked in an upper story, full a dozen got into the boat before him. He told Andrew to put off, but Andrew would not till the boat should be full; and soon it was crammed. James Lambert then said it was a shame of him to let so many on board. This angered the man, and, when the boat was so crowded that her gunwale was not far above water, he shoved her violently off into the tideway, and said words which, if he has not prayed God to forgive them in this world, will perhaps hang heavy round his neck in the next.

"To hell — ye beggars!" he cried.

This rough launching made the overladen boat wobble. The women got frightened, and before the boat had gone twenty yards she upset in dark, icy water, ten feet deep.

It was night.

"Before the boat coupit t athegither, they a' flew to me that could: for they a' kenned me. I' the water, them that hadna a haud o' me, had a haud o' them that had a haud o' me, and they carried me doon like leed."

Now it is an old saying, and a true one, that "Afterwit is everybody's wit." Were I to relate at once what James Lambert accomplished, hundreds would imagine they could have done the same. To correct that self-deception, and make men appreciate this hero correctly, I shall stop here, and entreat my readers, for the instruction of their own minds, to lay down this narra-

tive and shut their eyes, and ask themselves how it was possible for mortal man to escape drowning himself, and to save those who were drowning him. You have seen that it cost him the skin of his finger to get clear of a single baker. Here he was clutched and pinned by at least four desperate drowning creatures, strong as lions in their wild despair, and the weight of twelve people more hanging on to those that clutched him, so that the united weight of them all carried down the strong swimmer, like a statue in a sack.

"Sirr, when yeve twa feet i' the grave, your mind warks hard. I didna struggle, for it was nae mair use than to wrastle wi' a kirk. I just strauchtened myself oot like a corp *u*, and let them tak' me doon to the bottom o' the Clyde; and there I stood upright, an' waited; for I kenned the puir sauls would droon afore me, and I saw just a wee wee chance to save them yet. Ye shall understond, sirr, that when folk are drooning, they dinna settle doon till the water fills their lungs and drives the air oot. At first they waver up and doon at sairtain intervals. Aweel, sirr, I waited for that, on the grund. I was the only ane grunded, ye'll obsairve. A slight upward movement commenced. I took advantage, and gied a vi'lent spang wi' my feet against the bottom, and, wi' me choosing my time, up we a' came. My arms were grippit; but I could strike oot wi' my feet, and, before ever we reached the surface, I lashed oot like a deevil, for the quay. Aweel, sirr, wi' all I could do, we didna wend abune a yard, or maybe a yard an a hauf, and doon they carried me like leed. I strauchtened myself as we sank, and I grunded. The lave were a' roond me like a fon *v*. I bides my time, and, when they are inclining upward, I strikes fra the grund; an' this time, mair slanting towards the quay. That helpit us, and in a dozen vi'lent strokes we maybe

gained twa yards this time. Then doon like leed. Plays the same game again, up, and doon again. And noo, sirr, there was something that turned sair against us; but then there was something for us to bollance it. It was against us that they had all swallowed their pint o' water by this time, and were na sae buoyant: it was for us that the water was shallower noo, maybe not mair than twa feet ower heed. Noo this twa feet wad droon us as weel as twanty; but wi' nae mair nor twa feet water abune us, I could spring up fra the grun by mere force, for the grun gies ye an awfu' poower for a foot or twa. Sae noo I'm nae suner doon than up again, and still creeping for the quay, and the water aye a wee bit shallower. The next news is, I gat sair spent, and that was bad: but, to bollance that, some folk on the quay gat rapes and boat-hooks, and pickit off ane or twa that was the nearest: and now ilka time I cam' up, they pickit ane off, and that lightened my burden; and bymby I drave a couple into shallow water mysel' wi' my feet. When I was in seven fut water mysel', and fewer folk hauding me doon, I got to be maister, and shovit ane, and pu'd anither in, till we landed the whole saxteen or seventeen. But my wark was na done, for I kenned there were mair in the river. I saw the last o' my ain band safe, then oot into the Clyde, wherever I heerd cries, and sune I fand twa lasses skirling, takes 'em by their lang hair, and tows them to the quay in a minute. Just as I'm landing thir *w* twa, I hear a cry in the vara middle o' the river, and in I splash. It was a strapping lass — they caed her Elizabeth Whitelaw. 'C'way, ye lang daftie,' says I, and begins to tow her. Lo an' behold! I'm grippit wi' a man under the water. It was her sweethairt. She was hauding him doon. The hizzy was a'reicht, but she was drooning the lad: pairts these *x* twa lovers — for their gude — and taks

'em ashore, one in each hand. Aweel, sirr, I saved just ane mair, and then I plunged in again, and sairched; but thir was nae mair to be seen noo: three puir lasses were drooned: but I did na ken that at the time. And noo I'll tell ye a farce. I'm seized wi' a faintness, and maks for the shore. But I gat weaker, and dazed like, and the lights o' Glasgow begins to flecker afore my een: and thinks I, 'I'll no see *ye* again; I'm done this time.' It was all I could do for the bare life, to drift to the hinder part of the quay. I hadna the power to draw mysel' oot. I just grippit the quay, and sobbit. The folk were a' busy with them I had saved; nane of them noticed me, and I would ha' been drooned that nicht: — but wha d'ye think saved me that had saved sae mony? — an auld decrepit man: haw, haw, haw! He had a hookit stick, and gied me the handle, and towed me along the quay into shallow water, and I gat oot, wi' his help, and swooned deed away. I'm tauld I lay there negleckit awhile; but they fand me at last, and then I had fifty nurses for ane."

Have I exaggerated? Does history record any other example of a man being clutched by a great number of drowning people, and carried to the bottom, and saving them all in the lump, and then dashing in and saving the outsiders in detail?

By way of illustration let the reader imagine an umbrella-frame, and only four or five curved whalebones attached to the top part of the upright: now fasten several other curved whalebones, high up, to each of those four or five curves. Now plunge the whole frame into water till the upright touches the ground. Not one of the sixteen curved pieces will touch the ground. But, in the water, if a person, male or female, clings to a fixed upright, that person's body floats up, more or less; at all events, it inclines towards the horizontal.

Now James Lambert, by artificially straightening his body, made himself the stick of that human umbrella, or the upright post they all clung to directly or indirectly, and so were kept floating in a curve, instead of sinking to the bottom. This enabled him, but only by patiently and artfully watching the fluctuations up and down of those floating bodies, to spring at the nick of time from the hard ground, and carry them all to the surface for a few seconds. The rest is detail, and his own narrative makes it clear. But see what intellectual and moral qualities are here combined. Genius is often without courage; courage is generally without genius, and so indeed is bare skill; and, in desperate danger, how often has genius lost its head, and blundered like an idiot; how often has courage lacked invention, and relied on precedent, that did not fit the novel danger, and so led it to death. But this man, even as his body touched the water, was all cool courage and swift inventive genius. He did not repeat himself as mere skill does. Hugged in the water by a single man — the baker — he hit, with prompt invention, on the one way to save both lives; he used the baker's own chest as a fulcrum, and so tore himself free. But clutched by a dozen, and more, he never attempted to get free at all, but straightened and stiffened himself into an upright post, and used the ground as his fulcrum, to save himself and those who were drowning themselves and him.

I come, now, to the sad ending of all these glorious deeds.

James Lambert was up the river working, but at what business I forget. An engineer fell into the water, and sank for the last time, before James could get to the place.

Following the direction of persons on the bank, he flung himself from a bridge, and dived for the man.

But the others had not marked the place precisely, and when, after repeated efforts, he brought the man to land, life was gone forever. To use his own words, "It was a dear jump. He lost his life, and I lost my sight."

It was winter, and he was perspiring freely when he jumped into the icy water.

Very soon after, a great dazzling seized him, followed by darkness. It cleared after a time, and he saw again. But the same thing occurred at intervals; and, by degrees, the attacks came oftener, and remained longer, until at last the darkness settled down, and the light fled forever.

Think of it. This twenty years he can no longer see the "Dominie's Hole," nor "the three stanes," nor "the peat bog," nor "the dead-house," nor the Clyde itself, where every bend is the scene of some great good feat he did. More than fourscore eyes he rescued from the darkness of the grave; yet unjust fate and dire calamity have not left him one poor orb to see the blessed day and the faces of those he has saved.

Now turn back to the story repeated from the Glasgow *Times*, and surely you will say that it was a rare, and noble, and poetic distress, and worthy to be sung by some great poet.

I am no poet, and cannot adorn so strong a tale; therefore I have aimed at that which all honest men can attain, if they will but take trouble; viz., the exact truth. I travelled to see him. I stayed in Glasgow many days to know him. I took him down to the Clyde, and verified every spot, and got him to tell me each principal incident over again, at its own site, and I noted down his very words, as well as I could.

The next thing was to rescue his features from oblivion. I asked him to meet me at the photographer's.

He did so, but, horrible to relate, dressed as all Scotchmen dress on Sundays.

"James," said I, severely, "was it in this clerical suit you saved so many lives?"

"No likely," said he; "except yon carle that was bathing o' the sabba' day. Mon, I was for coming in my auld claes that I wrought at the mill yon time: but the wife cried shame; she wadna let me."

Observe how devoid of common-sense is common-sense, the moment it meddles with the things of genius. So I sent him back for his old clothes, and I now present you not indeed the hero himself, but his true wreck. The picture will mislead you, unless you allow for that sad misrepresentation of the manly mouth which takes place when a hero loses his front teeth. Observe the thin straight lips, and the strong chin: those lips, when the teeth were behind them, marked iron resolution. Add to the straight, thin, American mouth, an eye full of fire; and, by the wreck, you may divine the man.

OBSERVATIONS.

James Lambert is of ordinary size, but very clean-built and wiry. The signs of great activity still linger about him. The easy attitude in which I first saw him was that of a man who could spring across the room in a moment from where he stood.

In manner he is two men; sometimes grave, slow, and thoughtful; sometimes fiery and vivacious; and the changes are well timed; for he relates his feats with French vivacity, but makes his reflections in a slow, thoughtful way that is Scotch all over. It is just possible that "race" may have a hand in his vivacious half, for he admits a French progenitor, and "Lambert" is a French name.

I have not known him long enough to draw his whole character; but to what is revealed in his recorded acts I can add one trait; he is a man without bile. I offer one example: after describing with great spirit how he saved a respectable acquaintance, he told me that the said individual had afterwards avoided him; and then he stopped and went in a moment from his French manner to his Scotch.

"And — I hae — obsairved, sirr, that the mair part — of them I hae saved — shuns me."

Straight I exploded with ire at their baseness. But I could not convey my spleen into this heroic bosom void of bile.

"Na, sirr," said he, with the same measured thoughtfulness, "I just — think — it is ower great — a debt — to awe to ony man; and they feel it a burrden."

Almost any other man, finding, in a certain base biped, vanity too strong for gratitude, would have vented the discovery in tones, either of wrath, or of piteous complaint; but this man sounded like a patient, inquiring philosopher: certainly a faint tone of regret pierced through, but no more than became a philosopher, gently disappointed in mankind. To me, who have seen so much storming and blubbering over trifles, this thoughtful, uncomplaining dignity was as pathetic as it was noble.

If the man seems egotistical, his discourse being all about himself, you must remember that I kept drawing him out, and that the true balance of the dialogue is not presented, since I have suppressed the greater part of my questions, as not worth printing.

I ought also to tell you that his manner of relating his exploits had no touch of vanity, nor boasting, nor self-gratulation. It was a thing both strange and fine to see how he was carried away out of the dark present

into those glowing scenes, re-lighted by the sun of memory. As he related, the whole man quivered with excitement. When he was telling me how he dived for the little boy opposite "the dead-house," I took his hand, and — under cover of sympathy, being a prying scoundrel — I furtively felt his pulse. It was beating about one hundred and ten to the minute; *his heart was once more doing the deed,* and his poor blind face shone with angelic goodness, and gleamed with heroic fire.

This hero and martyr has a foible, not an uncommon one in Glasgow; but still a sad fault. He is too fond of whiskey — much.

Bookmakers' morality will say, "Why reveal the infirmity of such a man?" I'll tell you; because in less than two hundred years the first stone of honesty in biography will have to be laid; so, not to waste the world's time, I lay it now.

Since, in this best of all possible worlds, much is done for moderately good killers of men, you may be curious to know what man has done for this incomparable saver of men.

He has earned the gold medal of the Humane Society twice, and the silver about twelve times.

He has never received either.

He better deserves every order and decoration the state or the sovereign can bestow, than does any gentleman or nobleman in this land, whose bosom is a constellation. Yet not a cross nor a ribbon has ascended from the vulgar levels, where they grow like buttercups, to the breast of this immortal hero. And why? he is but a saver of men, not a killer; he is only a Christian hero; and, in the distribution of glory, the world, including the very preachers of the gospel, is as rank a heathen as ever in spite of Christ; and a fool in spite of Voltaire.

The one public honor paid him is this. — A suspension bridge has been built over the Clyde where he saved more than twenty lives that one dark night; and over this bridge two men pass gratis till they die; Bailie Harvey and Hero Lambert. The rest of mankind pays a halfpenny.

So much for his decorations. Then for his pensions. He has but one; and that is local, not imperial, though the places the man adorns are the empire and the world. The Barony Parish, Glasgow, allows him three and sixpence a week. But he was earning twenty-five to thirty when he fell blind. So that his local allowance, for benefits to mankind, does not compensate him for his calamity, by five-sixths; and his heroic and philanthropic feats are left out of the arithmetic altogether.

I propose, then, to those who govern this country, to depart from the stiff precedents of savages, and to take wider and more enlightened views of heroism, beginning with James Lambert, since they cannot begin better. They have the example of France; she bestows civic honors on the heroes who save, as well as on the heroes who kill.

I propose to the Humane Society to bestow their gold medal. Anything less would be no compliment to this great saver.

As for the English public, that needs no spur. When this narrative appears in an influential journal, hundreds will desire to improve James Lambert's condition. The best way to do that would be to secure him a fixed and large increase of income for the few years he has to live. It is out of my way, but in this one case I would receive and acknowledge donations with this object.

But I also wish to procure him the blessed boon of personal sympathy. I will not encourage a raid of staring dunces, pragmatical charlatans, and gaping

quidnuncs; for that would do him harm, not good. But I will give his present address to any ladies and gentlemen who may be able and willing to go to him in the right spirit. Any such superior soul, who will visit him in person, and with gentle hand draw him awhile from the things present, which he cannot see, to the past, which he can see, will mount high on what an old author calls "the ladder of charity," for this will be a charity in a very refined and gracious form; it will be charity + brains. None will repent such a visit: though his estate is humble, he is one of nature's gentlemen, fit company for an emperor; and he is a sight better worth seeing than half the public shows; for he is a man without his fellow.

GLOSSARY.

a. Cry me to him, i.e., *Cry right — left — etc., till I find him.*

b. The lave — *The rest.*

c. Faitour — *Feat.*

d. Soom — *Swim.*

e. Callant — *A boy.*

f. Naepkin — *Handkerchief. English.*

g. Lug — *Ear.*

h. Twarree — *Two or three.*

i. Washing-bay, or bayne — *Tub. French,* "*Bain.*"

j. Dour — *Grim — severe. Latin,* "*Durus.*"

k. A wean wastit — *A child thrown away.*

l. Spate — *Flood.*

m. Win, won, etc. — *Tenses of the old verb* "*wend*" — *to go. Saxon.*

n. Fleichting — *Scolding.*

o. Cummer — *A woman of the people. French,* "*Commère.*"

p. Scairt and skirl — *Run and squeal. Scairt is French* "*Sortir.*"

q. Bymby — *By and by.*

r. Wagging on me — *Beckoning to me.*

s. Neif — *Fist. English.*

t. Coupit — *Upset.*

u. Corp — *Corpse.*

v. Fon — *Fan.*

w. Thir — *These.*

x. These — *Those.*